



HOW TO PLAY  
(*AND MISPLAY*)  
Slam Contracts

BY  
FRED L. KARPIN

SINCE the beginnings of contract bridge, it has been emphasized—and taught—that the play of slam contracts is no different from the play of part-score or game contracts. It has been stated repeatedly that if you could master one, you could master the others simultaneously. Actually, it could be said that it is *easier* to play slam contracts, simply because in a slam situation one has virtually all of the high cards in the deck and one's plan of action can be more consistent and less variable than in the other situations. The real reason why playing slam contracts is so difficult for the average player is that the situation itself, with its do-or-die aspects, panics him into hasty decisions and irrational blunders.

In this book Fred L. Karpin carefully

*(Continued on back flap)*



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HOW TO PLAY (AND MISPLAY)  
SLAM CONTRACTS

HOW TO PLAY (AND MISPLAY) SLAM CONTRACTS

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## FOREWORD

Throughout the decades since the birth of contract bridge, constituted authority has emphasized—and taught—that the play of slam contracts is no different from the play of part-score and game contracts. As justification for this approach, its proponents have pointed out that, after all, when one bids a slam it is simply because his side has the additional values needed to produce twelve or thirteen tricks; that is, if  $X$  number of points (or horsepower) will yield a game for nine, ten, or eleven tricks, then the addition of  $Y$  number of extra points (or horsepower) will yield the excess tricks needed to make a slam. And from this approach came the generalization that the application of good judgment and correct technique will enable the wielder to fulfill a slam contract with the identical facility with which he makes a game or a part-score contract.

From an arithmetical point of view, all of the above is quite true: just as  $7 + 3 = 10$ , so  $10 + 2 = 12$ . But, unfortunately, it is not the whole truth. Without any doubt, the ability to add, good judgment, and correct technique are a winning combination calculated to produce optimum results, whether it be in a game of bridge or in one's chosen vocation or avocation. And, certainly, if one's hand will produce ten tricks at, let us say, a four heart contract, then the addition of two more aces figures to produce twelve tricks. Obvious also is the fact that if one has the energy to reach over to dummy, plus the ability to use his thumb and forefinger (of either hand) to pull winning cards out of his own hand, then the cashing of twelve or thirteen tricks is no more and no less strenuous, either physically or mentally, than the cashing of ten tricks employing the same ability. But there is more to the playing of slam contracts than merely cashing additional winners.

In my opinion, it is usually *easier* (or, rather, *should be easier*) to play slam contracts properly than to play game or part-score con-

tracts. The reason is this: When you get to a slam on reasonably accurate bidding, either your contracted-for tricks are there for the taking, or the naked eye can generally spot the suit in which the needed trick or tricks can be developed from a potentiality to an actuality. In contrast, at a part-score contract, one often doesn't know from trick to trick just how the future will look when the sun rises (or sets, as the case might be); and the original plan adopted for playing a part-score contract is frequently changed three, four, or five times, depending on what has evolved since the original plan was put into action. In short, at a part-score contract there are so many interrelated factors and resultant variations that any initial plan or approach adopted seldom becomes permanent. It must be modified as day-to-day (or trick-by-trick) living brings into view previously unknown or unconsidered factors.

At a game contract, the variations are usually fewer than at a part-score contract, and hence the original plan of action is not subject to so many modifications. The reason for this is that at a game contract one has more material to work with. Nevertheless, even at a game contract one often doesn't know from trick to trick exactly how (or where) the final solution will be resolved.

Basically, slam contracts are generally easier to play than either part-score or game contracts simply because at a slam one has virtually all of the high cards in the deck, enabling certainty to replace uncertainty; that is, one's assets are known and calculable, and are not mere potentials which may or may not materialize depending on future developments. Thus, one's original plan of action can be based on a firm foundation, and the necessity for any major deviation becomes reduced to a minimum.

But from an over-all, realistic point of view, the practical difference between playing slam contracts and below-slam contracts is one that will be readily apparent on reflection (and from vicarious experiences). It is a difference that one doesn't like to think about, which probably accounts for the fact that so little stress has been placed upon it by our overseers, the authorities: *The pressure of being in the stratosphere of a slam contract is quite different from the pressure of being in a normal, down-to-earth, repetitive contract.*

Permit me to introduce this subject of *pressure* by what may appear to be a *non sequitur*. There are all sorts of bridge players in this

world, and I would like to categorize them into these two classifications: (1) those who play quickly and (2) those who play slowly. It is accepted as human nature that those who play quickly have an aversion to those who play slowly. But I have never yet seen anyone, no matter how quickly he himself plays, register an objection to his opponent playing a slam contract slowly. The quick one is appreciative of the fact that a slam contract is big business—a matter of possibly 1000 to 2500 points—and that for the fleeting moment of the duration of play, careful and time-consuming analysis has properly become the order of the day; and where the destiny of one's opponent is at stake, the practice of tolerance is fitting and proper. It is quite understandable that the quick one is annoyed when his opponent spends ten minutes playing out a two club contract, and finally emerges triumphant with an overtrick, worth an extra 20 points, but having spent nine out of the ten minutes deciding how the overtrick could be made (when he could have spread his hand after thirty seconds and claimed his contract). No such annoyance is felt, however, when an unusually lengthy period of time is expended on the play of a slam contract. Evidently, then, slam contracts are in a different category from everyday, run-of-the-mill contracts; they are, in fact, specialized, delicate, high-finance, affairs.

Now to the *pressure* aspect. We are not discussing here the top-flight expert, who has ice in his veins, who has adjusted to all levels of bridge living, and to whom a slam contract gives promise of a welcome increase in his take-home pay. The pressure of elevation or competition does not affect his balance (except on rare occasions) or influence his behavior and reactions. In experience, he has learned to adapt himself and to take things in stride. He is a true professional who reacts normally under the stress of competition.

But for the remaining 99.9 per cent of our nation's bridge players, they are amateurs playing the game for the fun of it; bridge to them is a pleasant pastime. When they find themselves in slam contracts, they feel that they have ascended into a rarefied atmosphere, and the pressure is frequently more than they are accustomed to taking (and it's just about impossible to carry an oxygen tank to every bridge game in order to facilitate one's breathing). They are nervous, tense, and worried, even before the opening lead is made, for they realize that *if they slip just once, there will be no recovery*; and they will

plunge headlong into doom, with partner's "Bon Voyage!" echoing in their ears. To them, a slam is a relatively new experience, on foreign terrain, with life or death hanging in the balance. In these circumstances, they usually react in an abnormal fashion; their thinking is illogical, their vision is blurred—and they may even appear to be in a hypnotic trance.<sup>1</sup>

Objectively speaking, the *approach* to the play of slam contracts is theoretically no different from the approach to the play of ordinary contracts—or, at least, so it says in textbooks. But the fact is that it just isn't so. In theory, the approach to walking along the four-foot-wide sidewalk in front of your house is no different from the approach to walking along the same sidewalk fifteen thousand feet up in the air, with nothing but emptiness on each side of you. I certainly wouldn't recommend the latter for any of my friends, except perhaps to the American eagle. If playing slams were the same as playing routine contracts, the pulse-beat of our bridge players wouldn't accelerate so rapidly when they arrive at slam contracts, and it wouldn't be necessary to attempt to calm them down with a "Steady, boy!"

Is it not within our province to acclimatize our rank-and-file bridge players to the rarefied atmosphere of the slam zone, to provide them with the proper equipment to withstand the rigors of stratospheric conditions, and to neutralize the pressure resulting from the occupancy of lofty heights? Also, is not the problem of their adjustment to slamdom psychological to a great extent? Is it not primarily a question of convincing our fellow bridge player that astronaut training is completely unnecessary to attain the heights for which he was destined, heights which are attainable with learning and practical experience? Is he not ready and willing to accept the joys (and profits) resulting from the fulfillment of slam contracts?

What better way to accomplish this than to take him by his clammy hand, lead him to the summit of Mt. Olympus, and remain with him to explain things as he observes others who have been in the position of attempting to surmount the obstacles inherent in slam-

<sup>1</sup> Many years ago, an old-timer who was not too good a bridge player, just before playing in his second major tournament, said to me: "I hope I don't hold too many tremendous hands. Holding tremendous hands is a fearful responsibility!"

dom? As the precise details unfold, he will see not only how (and why) success crowned the efforts of some, but also how (and why) failure descended on others. Through observation and study, he will thus profit from understanding the winning execution of those who became heroes; and he will profit equally from observing the mistakes of others, by learning how to avoid the pitfalls which befell the latter.

And so, this book is dedicated to the surmounting of the hitherto insurmountable: the play of slam contracts with equanimity, assurance, and correct technique—with no apology due anyone if things go wrong on occasion.

I am most grateful to Alphonse (“Sonny”) Moyse, Jr., the editor and publisher of the *Bridge World* magazine, for permission to republish various deals which were selected from the monthly issues of the *Bridge World*. Without Mr. Moyse’s gracious permission to reprint these deals, I would have found it virtually impossible to write this book, since the *Bridge World* has been our nation’s sole written recorder of top-level play (and misplay) through the years from 1929 to date.

FRED L. KARPIN

October, 1961



## PROLOGUE

### Bidding (and Misbidding) Slams

Virtually all of the deals featured in this book arose in top-flight games, in the big leagues of the bridge world. It might be presumed, therefore, that the bidding would always be reasonably sane and sound. Yet, in many instances, nothing could be farther from the truth, as the reader will soon perceive for himself; and frequently the bidding is almost unbelievably unsound. (Demonstrating, perhaps, that bad bidding makes good card players.)

It may come as a revelation to many readers that defective, inferior, and unwarranted slam bidding is not a privilege reserved only for non-experts. It is inherent in all bridge players, and manifests itself wherever bridge players ply their trade. Somehow, however, one doesn't associate bad slam bidding with experts who, after all, appreciate full well that bidding is nothing more than a contractual estimate of the number of tricks one figures to win in the play. Nevertheless, overreaching oneself has become a dominant characteristic of most bridge players, at all levels.

Quite naturally, the reader who looks up to experts with reverent awe may be shocked at many of the actual bidding sequences which will be presented. The foregoing paragraphs were introduced with the hope that they will be accepted as the truth; and that, as such, the truth will partly cushion the impact of the shock of observing the experts' inexpert bidding of slams.

Now to the crux of this prologue: namely, the intent of this book on how slam contracts are played. We (you and I) are not here to cast judgment on whether one's bidding is good or bad, right or wrong, justified or unjustified. The issue is, rather, that either by voluntary action, partner's lack of judgment, or predestination, the bidders found themselves in some specific slam contract, *and they either extricated themselves or they perished*. How they got to their

contracts, or whether they belonged there or not, is completely immaterial. We are here to observe how they handled themselves *in the play*; we are not here to condemn them for their bidding transgressions, which were forgotten at the moment the opening lead was made and the dummy came into view. We are not psychiatrists attempting to understand the basis or cause of the irrational thinking of a youth indulging in abnormal flights of fancy. We are friends and neighbors, watching with anticipation, to see whether that youth, grown into manhood, can adjust successfully to his environment.

The purpose of this book is to give the reader an insight into how the mind of the expert functions *in the play of the cards only*; to illustrate how his playing power derives its strength not only from his mastery of correct technique, but also from his logical simplicity of play, wherein there frequently lurks some diabolical scheme designed to ensnare some gullible opponent or to outwit him.

Sometimes, of course, the expert fails, for various reasons: He is trapped by his own lack of knowledge of the specific winning technique required in a given situation; or he has a blind spot, which results in his failure to see the obvious; or the intended victim sees the expert's trap and avoids it; or the intended victim never sees it, and yet somehow stumbles to success.

And now the curtain rises. Or, to pervert Shakespeare and Hamlet, his spokesman of the moment: "The play's the thing."



# HOW TO PLAY (AND MISPLAY) SLAM CONTRACTS



# 1

## NOMINATIONS TO SLAMDOM'S HALL OF FAME

The slam deals featured in this chapter were all played by our top-flight experts. In my opinion, their adroit handling of these deals warrants placing them on a pedestal for future generations of bridge players to admire and to strive to emulate. But the play of one deal, no matter how magnificent, is not sufficient justification for the enshrinement of the player into a Hall of Fame. Such a selection, in any type of competitive endeavor, must be founded on a consistently high standard of performance throughout one's career in that field, a performance not only well above average, but actually above and beyond the call of duty.

Speaking as one who has been associated with top-level bridge for over three decades—both as an objective reporter and as an active participant—I would like to state that my recommended list of nominees to Slamdom's Hall of Fame, as embodied in this chapter, is not predicated merely on one brilliant stroke which won a skirmish. That particular stroke, which is submitted herein as a character witness for the nominee, is but a single example of hundreds of similar strokes applied with maximum efficiency in the struggle of the expert nominated for bridge immortality. Through their opportunistic exploits, these experts have won not only minor skirmishes and important battles, but major wars. As living proof we have their records, both in tournament play and at the rubber-bridge table, where consistent winners in high-stake, top-level games are hard to find.

Here, then, is a glimpse into a sublime, fleeting moment in the lives of some of the truly great in action.

## 2 *How to Play (and Misplay) Slam Contracts*

### HAND 1

One of the world's greatest players, from the viewpoint of both spur-of-the-moment brilliancy and complete mastery of correct technique, is Oswald Jacoby, of Dallas, Texas. The deal which follows is submitted in evidence:

		NORTH	
		♠	A 2
		♥	K 9 6 4
		♦	J 10 7
		♣	9 8 4 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	K	♠	9 7 5 4
♥	Q J 10 7	♥	A 8 5 3 2
♦	9 6 4 3	♦	8
♣	J 6 5 2	♣	Q 10 7
		SOUTH	
		♠	Q J 10 8 6 3
		♥	—
		♦	A K Q 5 2
		♣	A K

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠ (!)	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♦	Pass
7 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

This hand arose in a "social" (unskilled, non-expert) bridge game some years ago, and the most gracious thing that one can say about North's leap to four spades is that the bid made a hero of Jacoby, sitting South. When the subsequent employment of the Blackwood slam convention revealed that North possessed one ace and one king, Ozzie assumed that they were the ace and king of spades.

West's opening lead of the queen of hearts was ruffed by declarer, after which he led—guess what?

Had it been the queen of trumps, dummy's ace would have cap-

tured West's king, and then a trump lead to the jack would have disclosed the bad news that East's nine of trumps had just become the setting trick.

But, at trick two, Ozzie led the 10 of spades, and West's king was taken by dummy's ace. It was quite apparent that West's king was a singleton, for no one (not even in a social game) would have played the king from a K-x or K-x-x combination. So, at trick three, Jacoby led dummy's remaining trump, and put up his eight-spot, finessing East's nine. The queen and jack now picked up East's remaining trumps, and the grand slam was chalked up.

Easy as pie, wasn't it? But just try this deal on some of your friends. See how many of them—if any—will play the ten of spades at trick two, and then come to the conclusion that East holds the nine of spades.

## HAND 2

One of the nation's up-and-coming luminaries is Marshall Miles, of California. An example of his ingenuity can be observed in the next deal, in which he made a play that most of us would think of *afterward* and, unfortunately, belatedly. He made the play when it counted.

		NORTH	
		♠	K 10 8 5
		♥	K J 2
		♦	A K 8
		♣	K 10 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	A 7 3	♠	Q 9 6 4
♥	8 4	♥	7
♦	Q 10 7 6 5 4	♦	J 9 3 2
♣	6 3	♣	Q 9 7 5
		SOUTH	
		♠	J 2
		♥	A Q 10 9 6 5 3
		♦	—
		♣	A J 8 2

Both sides vulnerable. North dealer.

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NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 NT	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West got off to the beautifully deceptive lead of the three of spades (how could declarer assume that West was underleading the ace against a slam contract?). Marshall correctly played the eight-spot, since the five-spot would have given the show away. As he put it, "I gave myself an additional chance by playing the eight from dummy, as though I held the *ace*-deuce instead of the *jack*-deuce—and, after all, I *would* have played the eight had I held the ace-deuce." East covered the eight with the nine, and the jack won the trick. Eventually Marshall took all thirteen tricks, by guessing the location of the club queen.

To those readers who are condemning East for his failure to put up the queen of spades, permit me to point this out. If declarer had held the ace-deuce (instead of the jack-deuce), the play of the queen, taken by the ace, would have enabled declarer to subsequently finesse successfully against West's hypothetical jack; whereas the play of the nine would have restricted declarer to just two spade tricks, the ace and king.

This deal was played in a team-of-four match; and when it was replayed, the bidding and the opening lead were identical (a rough game!). But the other South declarer automatically played the five-spot from dummy, and East correctly saw no reason not to play the queen. When it won, he returned a spade to West's marked ace, for the setting trick.

#### HAND 3

All of us are familiar with three of the gifts which France has bestowed on the United States of America: Lafayette, the Statue of Liberty, and women's fashions direct from Paris. But few of us are acquainted with another of France's gifts: Boris Koychou, former French bridge champion and currently one of the top-ranking players of our nation. Here is an exhibit of Boris' talent. The deal arose in the French National Championships in 1947.

NORTH			
♠	8 5		
♥	J 10 7		
♦	J 8 2		
♣	A K 8 5 2		
WEST		EAST	
♠	10 9 3	♠	—
♥	Q 9 5 3	♥	8 4 2
♦	4	♦	K Q 10 9 7 6 5
♣	J 9 6 4 3	♣	Q 10 7
SOUTH			
♠	A K Q J 7 6 4 2		
♥	A K 6		
♦	A 3		
♣	—		

Both sides vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	3 ♦	6 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opened the diamond four, an obvious singleton, taken by South's ace. Boris surveyed the gorgeous dummy which, sadly, seemed doomed to languish overseas for the duration of the deal, since there seemed to be no way of reaching it.

At trick two, Boris led the ace of spades, West dropping the nine-spot; then came the king of spades, upon which West tossed the ten of spades. Now the spade deuce was led, and West was compelled to capture it with the three-spot. West now had no choice but to lead a club or a heart, either of which would provide declarer with access to dummy, to dispose of his losing heart and losing diamond.

If only East had, somehow, held the deuce of spades, West would have become a hero, instead of just an unknown who defended in brilliant fashion but came out with nothing to show for it. For if East had held that deuce, West would have avoided the end-play by throwing—as he did—the nine and ten of spades; and declarer would then have found it impossible to reach the dummy.

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### HAND 4

The heights to which the creative expert mind can soar when necessity demands is evidenced in the next deal, which arose in the United States National Championships in 1957. Our imaginative declarer was that Philadelphia great, Charles J. Solomon.

		NORTH	
		♠	A 5 4
		♥	2
		♦	A K 9 8 7 5 4
		♣	J 8
WEST	EAST		
♠ 9	♠ K Q J 8 3		
♥ 9 5 3	♥ 7 6 4		
♦ Q J 10	♦ 6 3 2		
♣ A 10 9 7 6 5	♣ 4 3		
		SOUTH	
		♠	10 7 6 2
		♥	A K Q J 10 8
		♦	—
		♣	K Q 2

North-South vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3 ♣	3 ♦	3 ♠	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	6 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opened the nine of spades, which was taken by North's ace. There was no doubt—based on the bidding—that the nine-spot was a singleton, and that West, for his three-club opening bid, figured to have the ace of clubs. Most players would have accepted a one-trick set as inevitable. But Charlie was able to utilize the available knowledge to bring home his slam contract.

At tricks two and three he cashed the ace and king of diamonds—and discarded his king and queen of clubs! He then ruffed a diamond high (establishing dummy's diamonds), after which he extracted the



adverse trumps. He now led the deuce of clubs, and West had the lead. Poor West had no choice but to return a club to dummy's jack, and Charlie discarded his remaining spades on the board's good diamonds.

## HAND 5

A challenge virtually identical to the one contained in the preceding deal was taken care of most efficiently at the table by Alphonse ("Sonny") Moyse, Jr. Sonny, the esteemed publisher and editor of *Bridge World*, has for decades been acknowledged by his peers as one of the finest players this nation has produced. His handling of the following deal speaks for itself (and for his peers):

NORTH			
♠	Q 5		
♥	4		
♦	A K 7 6 5 3 2		
♣	J 7 3		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K J 10 9 8 6 3 2	♠	7
♥	10 3	♥	7 6 2
♦	8 4	♦	Q J 9
♣	9	♣	K Q 10 6 4 2
SOUTH			
♠	A 4		
♥	A K Q J 9 8 5		
♦	10		
♣	A 8 5		

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2 ♥	4 ♠	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West opened the nine of clubs, and East's ten was taken by Moyse's ace. Three rounds of trumps were then drawn, followed by the ace and king of diamonds. On the latter, declarer discarded the ace of spades! South next ruffed a diamond, establishing the suit. He now

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led his remaining low spade toward dummy's queen, and West was a gone goose, having no option (after taking his king) but to return a spade. South was then enabled to discard his two losing clubs on the spade queen and on a high diamond.

Moyse's reasoning was logical and simple: West was marked with a seven- or eight-card spade suit, headed by the king. The club lead looked like (and felt like) a singleton. If West's hearts and diamonds could be eliminated, and the diamond suit established, West would be compelled to return a spade to the established dummy. But it took some high-class imagination to perceive the necessity of discarding the spade ace in order to put West into the lead.

### HAND 6

Lest some readers are beginning to disapprove of what appears to be male chauvinism on my part, in that all of my nominees up to this point have been men, let me hasten to soothe their ruffled feelings. In my opinion, one of the best players this world has ever known is Helen Sobel, of New York City. Not only is her technical execution flawless, but her intuition in critical situations borders on the clairvoyant. No bridge player, past or present, male or female, is more deserving of election to bridgedom's Hall of Fame than Helen Sobel. Here is a sample of her technique, at a grand slam contract. The deal was played many years ago, in a high-stakes rubber bridge game.

NORTH		
♠	K 10 7 6	
♥	9 7 4 2	
♦	A J 5	
♣	A 5	
WEST	EAST	
♠	5 2	♠ 9 4
♥	8	♥ J 10 5 3
♦	K Q 10	♦ 9 8 7 6 4 2
♣	Q J 9 6 4 3 2	♣ 10
SOUTH		
♠	A Q J 8 3	
♥	A K Q 6	
♦	3	
♣	K 8 7	

With no adverse bidding, Helen Sobel, sitting South, arrived at a *seven spade* contract, against which West decided to open the club queen, hoping his partner might ruff (he came close!).

Helen won with the king of clubs, after which the ace and queen of trumps were played, picking up the adverse pieces. Then followed the ace of diamonds, after which a diamond was ruffed in the closed hand. Next a club was led to dummy's ace (East showing out), followed by a ruff of the board's last diamond. Now the ace of hearts was cashed, and then South's last club was trumped in dummy. Helen now led the four of hearts, East played the five, Helen covered with the six-spot—and before West played, Helen started to put down the score for a grand slam bid and made.

What was the logic behind her diagnosis? Elementary—to people like Helen Sobel. West had shown up with seven clubs, three diamonds, and two spades. Hence, his eight of hearts, which he had played on the ace, had to be a singleton. Thus, the finesse was “marked.” Naively, perhaps, but if West had covered the four of hearts with the ten, Helen would have won it with the queen, re-entered dummy via a trump to entrap East's jack of hearts.

## HAND 7

This deal was never played! At least the play never got past the first trick. Nevertheless, it is submitted on behalf of an applicant to the Hall of Fame. Here is the background:

In the tournament world, crass materialism, in the form of the quest for master points,<sup>1</sup> has become the prime mover of our bridge civilization. In the frantic rush to get to the top of the heap—the elusive master point having established itself as the criterion of success—courtesy, decorum, and tolerance have tended to become merely academic concepts which are brushed aside as being incompatible with one's dog-eat-dog surroundings. In this tournament world, a cordial and sincere “Hello! How are you?” as one sits down at a table to meet his competitors, is deemed to be the badge of a dilettante. The protestations of players with regard to the ethical be-

<sup>1</sup> Master points, for the uninitiated, are points that one receives for winning, finishing second, third, etc., in tournaments. The number of points one receives varies, depending on the class of tournament: local, sectional, regional, or national. When one has scored 300 master points, he is accorded the title of Life Master, bridgedom's equivalent of graduating *summa cum laude* from a university.

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havior of their adversaries have become the order of the day, and are being voiced with increasing vigor and frequency: "Director! Our opponents have private signals. We are entitled to redress." Or, "Director! Our opponents used an illegal bid. We want compensation." Or, in its most usual implication, regardless of the precise wording: "Director! We wuz robbed."

With the above accepted as the normal background, it is most refreshing to unearth a situation where being ladylike (or gentlemanly) was not subordinated to one's personal welfare. The unbelievable incident which follows occurred in the National Team-of-Four Championships of 1944. Even if our heroine had been some unknown beginner I would nominate her as an Honorary Member of Bridgdom's Hall of Fame. It just happened that our heroine was Helen Sobel.

NORTH			
	♠	Q J 6	
	♥	A K 9 8	
	♦	9 7	
	♣	A 10 7 3	
WEST			
♠	K		
♥	J 7 5 2		
♦	A 5 4		
♣	Q J 9 6 4		
SOUTH			
	♠	A 9 8 7 3 2	
	♥	10	
	♦	K J 6 3	
	♣	K 2	
		EAST	SOUTH
		♠ 10 5 4	1 ♠
		♥ Q 6 4 3	3 ♥
		♦ Q 10 8 2	5 ♠
		♣ 8 5	

Neither side vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West opened the ace of diamonds—and then accidentally exposed her hand to Helen, sitting South. Helen saw that West held the singleton king of trumps.

She called the tournament director, who concluded that the situation was most unusual, and that there was no precedent to cover it. He hastily convened the National Laws Commission.

Helen suggested that the board be thrown out (redealt). West—coincidentally, also of the female gender—maintained that Helen was entitled to drop the singleton king. Helen said no. After due deliberation, the N.L.C. reached this amazing decision: Helen Sobel could take her choice: (1) Play the ace and catch the king (after which Helen would undoubtedly finesse for the queen of diamonds, to fulfill the contract). (2) Take the finesse and go down.

There could be no middle course, according to the N.L.C.

The question was never settled, for Helen refused to make a decision. And, to this day, the play of the deal has not been completed. When the event was concluded the following day, Helen's team had won the championship by a margin large enough that even if she had gone down at the slam contract, the final standings would not have been altered.

Bridge is really a rough game—decisions, decisions, decisions. . . .

## HAND 8

If just one deal had to be selected to demonstrate the precarious position of a player finding himself on the brink of disaster, from which escape seemed impossible, *and extricating himself*, the following deal would most vividly portray it. Our heroine, unknown to most of the nation's bridge players since she seldom plays in major tournaments, was Mrs. Barbara Tepper. The deal arose in New York City's Cavendish Club.

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		NORTH			
		♠	A K Q 9 7 4 2		
		♥	6		
		♦	A		
		♣	K J 9 3		
WEST				EAST	
♠	6	♠		♠	J 10 8 3
♥	K Q J 10 9 5 2	♥		♥	8 7 3
♦	J 6	♦		♦	9 5 4
♣	8 6 2	♣		♣	A 5 4
		SOUTH			
		♠	5		
		♥	A 4		
		♦	K Q 10 8 7 3 2		
		♣	Q 10 7		

Both sides vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3 ♥	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 ♠	Double	6 NT
Pass	Pass	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened the king of hearts and declarer took inventory. If she won the opening lead, there would be no way to re-enter the South hand to cash the diamonds, except via the club suit. And, if the latter were attempted, the opponents would grab the club ace and run a "million" heart tricks. It was equally apparent that even if the five adverse spades were divided 3-2 (which they weren't going to be, based on East's double of the six-spade bid), declarer couldn't make more than nine tricks.

So Barbara permitted West's king of hearts to win the opening lead! The queen of hearts was then led, upon which dummy's ace of diamonds was discarded! Now declarer led her king and queen of diamonds and Lady Luck rewarded her when West's jack of diamonds fell. Four more diamonds were then taken, resulting in this position prior to leading to trick nine:

		NORTH	
		♠	A K Q 9
		♥	—
		♦	—
		♣	K
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	J 10 8 3
♥	J 10 9	♥	—
♦	—	♦	—
♣	8 6	♣	A
		SOUTH	
		♠	5
		♥	—
		♦	2
		♣	Q 10 7

Barbara now led her last diamond, the deuce, and discarded the king of clubs from dummy. East had no discard to make—he was squeezed. If he discarded the ace of clubs, declarer's queen would become promoted into the twelfth trick; if, instead, he chose to toss a spade, dummy's nine of spades would become declarer's slam-going trick.

Such are the hands by which "Hall of Famers" are identified.

## HAND 9

This deal embodies a play which is simplicity itself—in retrospect. At the table, however, most players would not find it. Our declarer was Alfred ("Freddie") Sheinwold, world-famous bridge authority and player.

## 14 How to Play (and Misplay) Slam Contracts

NORTH			
♠	K J 5		
♥	Q J		
♦	A K 6 5 3 2		
♣	9 4		
WEST		EAST	
♠	9 8 4 2	♠	Q 10 3
♥	8 5	♥	10 9 4 2
♦	J 8	♦	Q 10 9 7
♣	Q 10 8 6 2	♣	J 7
SOUTH			
♠	A 7 6		
♥	A K 7 6 3		
♦	4		
♣	A K 5 3		

Both sides vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♣	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened the five of trumps, which was taken by dummy's jack. The *deuce* of diamonds was now played, East winning with the queen. Declarer took East's club return with his king, led a trump to the board's queen, ruffed a diamond, and drew the outstanding trumps. Then came a spade to dummy's king, after which dummy's established diamonds were cashed, declarer discarding his losing clubs and losing spade.

Playing "normally," declarer would win the opening trump lead, cash dummy's remaining trump, lead a club to the ace, and pick up the rest of the trumps. Next would come the A-K of diamonds, followed by a diamond ruff. When it would be revealed that the diamonds had failed to break 3-3, declarer would be forced to resort to a spade finesse. And when that lost, declarer would be down.

Freddie's line of play guaranteed the contract whether the six adverse diamonds were divided 3-3 or 4-2 (provided the adverse



trumps did not break 5-1). In playing the hand as he did, he gave up the chance for the extra trick. But, then, the expert has learned that one *never* jeopardizes the principal of a slam contract for the interest of an overtrick.

# HAND 10

Harry Fishbein needs no introduction to the bridge-playing world. For decades (it seems like centuries) his imaginative contributions have brought knowledge and pleasure to all bridge players. Here is an instance where his imagination rose to the fore.

			NORTH		
			♠ 10 4 2		
			♥ A K 8 7 3		
			♦ 8 6 4		
			♣ A.5		
WEST					EAST
♠ —					♠ J 9 8 5
♥ J 6 5 2					♥ 10 9 4
♦ J 7 5 2					♦ 3
♣ Q J 10 9 4					♣ K 8 6 3 2
			SOUTH		
			♠ A K Q 7 6 3		
			♥ Q		
			♦ A K Q 10 9		
			♣ 7		

North-South vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The queen of clubs opening was won by the ace, and a club was *immediately* ruffed in the closed hand. Harry then cashed the ace of trumps, and the bad news was unveiled: East had a sure trump trick. Now came the queen of hearts, after which Harry led the ace of

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diamonds, then the king, then the queen. Whether East trumped the second or third diamond, any return he made would enable declarer to reach dummy, and to get rid of his losing diamonds on the board's ace and king of hearts. And if East declined to ruff a top diamond, Harry would then trump a fourth round of diamonds, thereby establishing his fifth one. East could overruff the fourth diamond, of course, but that would be his side's only trick.

Just try playing the hand without trumping the five of clubs at trick two. East would then simply ruff the king of diamonds and exit with a club, thereby effectively preventing declarer from ever reaching dummy. As Harry played it—by ruffing the club at once—he put East in the position where the latter could no longer return a club, for dummy would ruff it.

Who thinks of these things—except experts like Harry Fishbein? The rest of us probably gaze at the dummy when it is put down, and ask ourselves: “How come we didn’t get to a grand slam?” And, eventually, the echo answers: “Grand slam?”

### HAND 11

If one were to look at all four hands below, the fulfillment of the *six heart* contract would be easy: Simply finesse West for the trump queen. Unfortunately, when Sidney Silodor, Philadelphia's world-renowned internationalist, played the deal, regulations prevented him from seeing all four hands (which made the play more difficult). Nevertheless, as one has come to expect from Sidney, he had no trouble acquitting himself nobly.

		NORTH	
		♠	K 9 2
		♥	K 7 6 2
		♦	A J 4 3
		♣	A 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	A J 8 5 3	♠	Q 10 7 6 4
♥	Q 5 3	♥	4
♦	10 9	♦	K 7 6 5 2
♣	7 5 3	♣	Q 6
		SOUTH	
		♠	—
		♥	A J 10 9 8
		♦	Q 8
		♣	K J 10 9 8 2

East-West vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

On the ten of diamonds opening lead, Sidney promptly put up dummy's ace, and just as promptly dropped the queen from his own hand. A trump was then led to the ace, after which the jack of trumps was finessed, the finesse winning. It was now routine to waltz in with thirteen tricks.

The reader might ask: "But what if the jack of hearts had lost to East's (hypothetical) queen?" All right, that's a fair question. Put yourself in East's position. Would you plunk down the king of diamonds with Silodor's "singleton" queen having fallen on the opening lead? Couldn't your partner have led the ten-spot from the 10-9-8 combination? Wouldn't you probably return a spade or a club?

Sidney, of course, was fully aware of the fact that the jack of hearts might easily have lost to East's queen—but he also foresaw that if this came to pass, East would almost surely *not* return the diamond king. Right?

## HAND 12

Even if Sam Stayman had never won a national or international championship, his introduction of the Stayman Convention<sup>2</sup> would be sufficient justification for his election to Bridgedom's Hall of Fame. But his reputation as a superb player and technician was established long before his classic contribution to bidding theory was formulated. Here is a representative sample of his proficiency.

		NORTH	
		♠	A 7
		♥	Q 8 4
		♦	A Q 2
		♣	A Q 10 9 8
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 10 9 6 4 3	♠	8 2
♥	J 9 7 3	♥	6 5
♦	5 3	♦	J 9 8 7 6
♣	2	♣	J 8 7 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q 3
		♥	A K 10 2
		♦	K 10 4
		♣	K 6 4

Stayman, sitting South, found himself in a *seven no-trump* contract, against which West led the jack of spades. Sam cashed three spades, the three top hearts, and the A-K of diamonds. Then followed a club to the ace, after which the ten of clubs was led and East's jack successfully finessed. Thirteen tricks were now there for the taking.

A simple hand, really—for those who take the time to count out the distribution of the opponents' cards. West was known to have

<sup>2</sup> The Stayman Convention, which has been adopted universally, is initiated by an artificial club response over an opening bid of one or two no-trump. Its aim is to get the partnership into a major suit of eight or more cards, it having been demonstrated in experience that a major suit of eight or more cards is preferable as a trump suit, in contrast to playing the hand at no-trump.

started with six spades (East having failed to follow suit to the third round of spades); four hearts (East having failed to follow suit to the third round of hearts); and two diamonds, since he had followed to the ace and king. When he followed suit to the first club lead, that had to be his only club, since his original cards were accounted for. Hence, East had to have the club jack.

## HAND 13

The Hall of Famer who played this deal, Walter Beinecke, is no longer with us, but his memory is perpetuated by his masterpieces of analysis, such as, for example, the following. The deal arose in the Vanderbilt Championships of 1945.

		NORTH		
		♠ K 8		
		♥ K Q 7 6		
		♦ A 7 6 3		
		♣ 8 4 3		
WEST				EAST
♠ Q 10 9				♠ J 5 4 3 2
♥ 9 8				♥ 5
♦ K Q 10 9 5 2				♦ J 8 4
♣ K 9				♣ J 10 6 5
		SOUTH		
		♠ A 7 6		
		♥ A J 10 4 3 2		
		♦ —		
		♣ A Q 7 2		

Neither side vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♥ (!)	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The opening lead of the diamond king was ruffed, after which a trump was led to the queen. Another diamond was then ruffed, fol-

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lowed by a second lead of trumps to dummy's king. The ace of diamonds was cashed next, a club being discarded, and then dummy's remaining diamond was trumped by declarer. Now came the king of spades, the ace of spades, the ace of clubs, and declarer's last spade was then ruffed in dummy.

At this point, West was known to have started with six diamonds (East having failed to follow to the fourth round), three spades, and two hearts. Therefore, he couldn't have started with more than two clubs (and he had followed suit when declarer cashed the ace of clubs).

So declarer led a club from dummy, East put up the ten, declarer played his queen—and West was end-played when he won the queen with the king: A diamond return would enable declarer to discard a losing club from either hand, while simultaneously trumping the trick in the other hand.

Had declarer mechanically taken a club finesse anywhere along the line (as opposed to laying down the ace, as he did), a club return by West would have compelled declarer to lose another club trick eventually.

The reader should note that even if East had held the club king, declarer's line of play also guaranteed the slam. On the club lead from dummy, if East had climbed up with his (presumed) king, declarer's queen would then have become supreme; and, if East, the possessor of the king, failed to play it, declarer's queen would win the trick.

### HAND 14

One of the greatest analysts in these United States is George Coffin, of Boston. Although Mr. Coffin has retired from active participation in major tournaments, many of the deals he played when he was a competitor will never be forgotten. The one which follows is a joy to behold.

NORTH			
♠	A K 7 5 3		
♥	K 9 3 2		
♦	Q 7 3		
♣	6		
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 4 2	♠	Q 10 9 8
♥	Q 5	♥	4
♦	J 10 9 5	♦	K 8 2
♣	A Q 8 4	♣	10 9 7 3 2
SOUTH			
♠	6		
♥	A J 10 8 7 6		
♦	A 6 4		
♣	K J 5		

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

The jack of diamonds opening lead was covered by dummy's queen, East's king, and South's ace.

George then led a spade to the ace, after which he trumped a low spade. Now came the key play: A low heart was led—and the board's nine-spot was finessed! Another spade was then ruffed with the heart ace, and the jack of hearts was next played to the dummy's king, West's queen falling. On the ace of spades and dummy's established fifth spade, George discarded his two losing diamonds. He now led dummy's singleton club, conceded a club trick to West, and ruffed his two losing clubs with dummy's two remaining trumps.

Superficially, it may appear that the finesse of West's queen of trumps involved a needless risk. Just try playing the hand any other way—and down you go! Suppose that, after trumping a spade, you led a heart to the king and then ruffed a second spade. It would now be necessary to play the heart ace to catch West's queen, leaving

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dummy with the 9-3 of trumps. If you then returned to dummy via the nine of trumps to cash the king and seven of spades (discarding South's two losing diamonds), North would be unable to ruff out South's two losing clubs. Hence, the king and nine of trumps had to be used as entries to establish and cash the spade suit; and the two remaining trumps were necessary for the ruffing of two clubs.

### HAND 15

Over the past few decades, one of our nation's truly great players has been J. G. Ripstra, of Wichita, Kansas. As evidence of his skill, the following deal is submitted for nomination to Slamdom's Hall of Fame. The play is not in the least spectacular or earth-shaking; as a matter of fact, it contains a simple type of play which arises every day, in every bridge game. Too many players, however, fail to master it, either because they are careless or, more usually, because they are generally overoptimistic in their approach to the play of the cards. The expert, on the other hand, is endowed with pessimism (as a result of unhappy past experiences), and is thus continually on the alert, searching for the pitfalls which are waiting to ensnare the overly optimistic.

NORTH		
♠	A 10 7	
♥	K J 5 2	
♦	K 9 2	
♣	Q 10 6	
WEST		EAST
♠	Q 9	♠ J 8 5 4 3 2
♥	10 9 8	♥ A Q 7 6 4 3
♦	J 10 8 4 3	♦ —
♣	J 8 2	♣ 9
SOUTH		
♠	K 6	
♥	—	
♦	A Q 7 6 5	
♣	A K 7 5 4 3	

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.



SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♣	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
6 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

West opened the ten of hearts, which declarer ruffed. He now drew trumps, playing the king, queen, and ace. A low diamond was then led, West played the four-spot, and declarer put in dummy's nine! Eventually, declarer lost a diamond, but that was his only loser.

As will be apparent upon observation, had declarer led either the ace of diamonds or the king initially, he would have found it impossible to avoid the loss of two diamond tricks. But Mr. Ripstra perceived that, once West followed to the first diamond lead, the only danger to the hand was that West might possess five diamonds, in which case the employment of a "safety play" became essential to declarer's survival. So he abandoned the possibility of making an overtrick, and took out insurance against bad distribution. Incidentally, had West chosen to put up the diamond ten on South's initial diamond lead, dummy's king would have captured the trick, after which South would have returned to his own hand to lead another low diamond towards dummy's remaining 9-2, thus guaranteeing the procurement of four diamond tricks.

It might be timely at this point to discuss briefly the business of trying for an overtrick when, in so trying, one's slam contract is jeopardized. It is poor business, and equally poor bridge, for inevitably one must bankrupt himself. Suppose that on the deal preceding the slam, Mr. Ripstra had gotten vulnerable by bidding and making three no-trump. If he now fulfills his *six club* contract, his score will look like this:

We	They
700	
750	
100	
120	
Total	
1670	

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If, on the other hand, he plays for the adverse diamonds to be divided 3-2 (which, frankly, they figure to be), and runs into a bad break (as existed), the score will now read like this:

We	They
	100
100	

In effect, by playing wide open for the overtrick, declarer would be risking 1670 points, to pick up 20 more. And the irony is that even if he makes the overtrick, his score is now 1690—and since rubbers are tabulated to the nearest 100, he would win a “17 rubber” *whether he made the overtrick or not!* It simply cannot be right to invest 1700 points, and if you’re lucky, you get back your investment, with no profit whatsoever; and if you’re unlucky, you lose all of it. To take a risk which might yield a profit (even if only a small profit) is understandable; but to deliberately and voluntarily put oneself in the position of “losing everything and gaining nothing” must be irrational, except to those who have a fondness for “Russian Roulette.”

### HAND 16

This is my final nominee to Slamdom’s Hall of Fame—and the tragedy is that its father is unknown, for reasons to be presented in a moment. I introduce the deal for enshrinement with the dedication:

TO OUR UNKNOWN AND UNSUNG HEROES:  
FOR ELECTION-AT-LARGE TO  
SLAMDOME’S HALL OF FAME

The history of the deal is this: When I was in the Army, I recommended a bridge club in Brooklyn, New York, to my master sergeant, who was going on leave for a few weeks. When he returned, he brought a deal to me, for comment. The deal—a thing of beauty—arose in that bridge club, and my master sergeant was in the role of a kibitzer. He never did find out the name of the declarer (it was a

she, not a he) who played it, and she will forever remain anonymous. As an addendum to the dedication, it therefore might be apropos to quote, for inscription onto the statue which will be erected to the individual members of the Hall of Fame, these words of Thomas Gray, taken from his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

While we're on the subject of anonymity, I would like to point out that my list of nominees to Slamdom's Hall of Fame is but a fragmentary list. There are, unquestionably, scores and scores of tournament players who belong to this select body, but whose deeds of glory have not been included in this book. However, their exploits and strokes of genius have, in the main, been recorded in the various bridge journals, bridge books, and bridge columns in newspapers, and discussed via the spoken word. These tournament stars will always live in the memories of their fellow bridge players as those whose names led all the rest.

But, unfortunately, there will never be recorded the magnificent accomplishments of those bridge players who have confined their playing to "home" bridge games. Their accomplishments have, since bridge came into being, passed by unnoticed in the night, and have thus "wasted their sweetness on the desert air." Had their accomplishments been applied in top-flight competition, they would have brought to these unknown heroes the plaudits of the world, and the deification they so richly deserve. To these unheralded heroes I can but apologize for my unavoidable and unrectifiable sin of omission; and to concretize my apology, I can do no more than to nominate all of them, en masse, as the presumed heroes of this deal:

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		NORTH	
		♠	A
		♥	A 6 4
		♦	A K 9 8 7
		♣	A J 8 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	K Q J 10 9 6	♠	5 4
♥	Q J 10 2	♥	9 8 5 3
♦	—	♦	J 6 4 3 2
♣	K 9 5	♣	7 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	8 7 3 2
		♥	K 7
		♦	Q 10 5
		♣	Q 10 6 3

Both sides vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♠	2 ♠	Pass	3 ♣
3 ♠	6 ♣	Pass	7 ♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opens the queen of hearts, which our heroes capture with their king. Then follows the finesse of the ten of clubs, after which the queen of clubs is finessed. A third round of clubs fells West's king.

From West's vulnerable bidding, he is surely marked with at least six spades, and perhaps seven. He has shown up with three clubs. He has led the queen of hearts, indicating that he has the Q-J-10, and perhaps Q-J-10-x. He has done a heap of bidding, vulnerable, with very few high cards. His only apparent justification for bidding so much with so little, must be that he has compensating distribution—a void in diamonds, probably, for otherwise he would not be sticking out his vulnerable neck.

So, at trick five, having the courage of our convictions, arrived at via the above analysis, we lead the seven of diamonds and finesse East for the diamond jack! The finesse succeeds. Another finesse is then taken, and five diamond tricks are ours. We chalk up the grand

slam. We have just attained bridge immortality—and all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.

If the ace of diamonds is the first diamond lead, the contract becomes unmakeable, even though West shows out and we subsequently bring home four diamond tricks via the proven successful finesse against East's jack. Five diamond tricks are imperative, for otherwise we can't dispose of two of our losing spades (dummy's ace of spades will take care of one of our spades, and dummy's remaining trump will take care of another). Hence, if the ace of diamonds is led first, we seal our collective doom. But, then, we wouldn't do a thing like that, for if we did, we wouldn't belong in Slamdom's Hall of Fame.

When I occasionally daydream and review my past, I sometimes wish that I could exchange some of my achievements for the privilege of being known as the person who played the above grand slam contract successfully. What greater glory can one have than the personal satisfaction of a flawless performance under the stress of competition, and the resultant esteem and admiration of his fellow bridge players?

To conclude on a historical note: In 1759, just before the British commander James Wolfe was about to attack Quebec (which he captured, thus terminating the French and Indian War—remember?), he recited "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" to his army. Then he said, "Gentlemen, I would rather have written those lines than to take Quebec."

## 2

# NOMINATIONS TO SLAMDOME'S HALL OF SHAME

The deals which comprise this chapter were all played—or, rather, misplayed—by famous experts. In contrast to the deals described in the preceding chapter, wherein distinguished experts were glorified either for a hand played magnificently or for a highly imaginative analysis of a situation which resulted in the downfall of their adversaries, this chapter concerns itself with inexcusable blunders, errors, or temporary blackouts which make our experts appear to be mere mortals.

As the reader views the mistakes made by our experts, he may feel that I am being unduly harsh in my criticism, and that I am not tempering judgment with mercy. Permit me to clarify and justify my position.

The average non-expert player commits many errors during the course of any afternoon's or evening's play. These are due, generally, to either a lack of experience or plain carelessness. These mistakes are inherent in his immature make-up; he is an amateur to whom bridge is a pleasant, part-time avocation. Quite often he doesn't even know that he has made a mistake until it is pointed out to him. His mistakes are expected and understandable, and hence at least partly excusable. From my self-appointed judgeship, I would simply warn the amateur culprit to be more careful in the future, and then I would dismiss the case.

But when the identical types of mistakes are committed by the professional expert, whose vocation is playing bridge, they are inexcusable—for the expert knew better, or should have known better.

In being perhaps overly critical in magnifying the expert's error, I again put myself in the role of a judge. This time, however, I am convicting an *expert* of the misdemeanor of "conduct unbecoming an expert." To each of my individual charges, the expert, if he were permitted to make a plea, would enter the plea of "guilty as charged"; and in no case would he feel bitter toward me for my lack of leniency. He would accept my sentence as his just desert.

In the mind of the reader, the impression might be created that in a few of the "Hall of Shame" deals I belittle some world-famous player, that I accentuate his Achilles' heel rather than his strength; and that I paint a portrait of "the evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Every player whose "crime" is listed and analyzed in this chapter is a potential or current nominee to the Hall of Fame. Unfortunately, space limitation precludes a depiction of the day-to-day skirmishes and victories of each of these experts. If it could be done, their splendid achievements at the bridge table would far outweigh their occasional mistakes. So, if any specific deal seems to diminish the stature of the expert involved, or cast a reflection on expertdom in general, it is only because I wanted to illustrate that the upper strata of our bridge society is human, and, as such, at times will blunder and err in critical situations.

When history records the sum total of the accomplishments of these experts, and makes them known to posterity, it will be demonstrated that they were among the world's best players.

The names of the "wrong-doers" have been omitted, deliberately. They have suffered long enough for their individual sins of commission and/or omission, sins of the type which all of us commit with regularity. But, unfortunately for our experts, they committed their sins while the eyes of the world were upon them—and they were caught redhanded.

## HAND 1

The following deal arose in the Masters Individual Championships some years ago. Our guilty South declarer eventually finished second in this high-class, invitational event.

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NORTH			
♠	A 7		
♥	K J 6 2		
♦	9 6 4		
♣	K Q 7 4		
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 10 8	♠	9 6 5 4 3 2
♥	A 10 9 3	♥	—
♦	J 8 3	♦	Q 10 7 2
♣	10 6 2	♣	9 8 3
SOUTH			
♠	K Q		
♥	Q 8 7 5 4		
♦	A K 5		
♣	A J 5		

Neither side vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 NT	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West's jack of spades opening lead was won by declarer's queen. A low heart was then played, West followed with the three-spot, dummy's king was put up—and suddenly darkness descended on declarer. When East failed to follow suit, declarer had to lose two trump tricks.

Admittedly, trumps didn't figure to break 4-0. But if they did, and East had all four of them, declarer was doomed to defeat owing to circumstances beyond his control, for nothing could in this case prevent East from making two trump tricks. If West had all four trumps, however, he could be restricted to just one trump trick.

Declarer, at trick two, should have plunked down the queen of trumps, as a safety play, to guard against West being the possessor of the outstanding four trumps. Whether West took his ace or not, the situation would then have been revealed, and routine play would now have enabled declarer to finesse West out of the ten and nine of trumps.



## HAND 2

The next deal has become a classic (of the infamous type) in expert circles. It was the final deal in the National Team-of-Four Championships of 1947, and had our South declarer (Mr. X) not slipped, he would have become the hero instead of the goat.

		NORTH	
		♠	K 9 6 3
		♥	9 8
		♦	A Q J 10 9
		♣	Q 5
WEST		EAST	
♠	8 5 2	♠	Q 10 7
♥	2	♥	Q 7 6 4
♦	K 8 6 2	♦	7 5 3
♣	J 8 7 6 4	♣	10 9 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A J 4
		♥	A K J 10 5 3
		♦	4
		♣	A K 2

Both sides vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
( <i>C. Goren</i> )	( <i>L. Hazen</i> )	( <i>S. Silodor</i> )	( <i>Mr. X</i> )
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	5 NT
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	7 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Goren opened a low club, which was taken by South's king. Declarer then cashed the ace of trumps, entered dummy via the club queen, and finessed for the queen of trumps. The finesse won—but Silodor still had the protected queen and subsequently made it.

Declarer's error was of the type that occurs frequently in virtually every non-expert game, namely, the cashing of the ace of trumps

prior to finessing for the queen on the second round of the suit. The play of the ace was designed to protect against West holding a singleton queen, and it presupposed that the adverse trumps were divided 4-1. But while the play guarded against the singleton queen in the West hand, it failed to guard against East having the Q-x-x-x of trumps. Mathematically, assuming that West had a singleton trump and that East had four trumps, the chance of West's singleton being the queen was but one out of five.

Let's put it this way. Suppose that you were told that West had one trump and that East held four trumps. How would you play the trump suit? Wouldn't you win the opening club lead with North's queen, and immediately finesse the nine of hearts; and when it won, finesse again? After that, your ace and king of trumps would fell East's queen. And you would then have taken the championship away from Goren, Silodor, and their teammates. (Of course, you would later have either guessed the diamond situation or finessed for the spade queen, to avoid the loss of a spade trick.)

### HAND 3

Ninety-nine percent of our nation's players would be excused for failing to fulfill the small slam contract which is presented next. But our actual declarer—a top-ranking Life Master—can have no excuse for his negligence in not thinking sufficiently. As a matter of record, a few seconds after he went down, he said out loud: “How stupid can I get!”

		NORTH	
		♠	6
		♥	A 7
		♦	10 9 5 4 2
		♣	K Q J 9 6
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	Q 7 5 3
♥	8 4 3	♥	K Q J 10 9 6 2
♦	K Q J 7 3	♦	6
♣	10 8 7 3 2	♣	4
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K J 10 9 8 4 2
		♥	5
		♦	A 8
		♣	A 5

Both sides vulnerable. East dealer.

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
3 ♥	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West's king of diamonds lead was taken by declarer's ace, after which the ace of trumps revealed the bad news that East had a sure trump trick.

Anxious to dispose of his losing diamond before East obtained the lead with the trump queen, declarer decided to cash the ace, king, and queen of clubs, and to discard his losing diamond on the club queen. As can be observed, declarer never got to lead the queen of clubs, for East ruffed the king with the seven of spades.

Perhaps the reader thinks that declarer was a bit unlucky—after all, East might have possessed three clubs, in which case declarer could have gotten rid of his losing diamond.

Let's go back. East, vulnerable, had opened the bidding with three hearts. Hence, he had to have six or seven hearts. East had also shown up with four spades, and he had followed to the opening diamond lead. As a minimum, eleven of his cards were therefore accounted for. Thus, East could not have held the hoped-for three clubs.

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Our expert declarer should have recognized that his sole hope of fulfilling the contract rested on the possibility that East had been dealt a singleton diamond—a not-too-unlikely possibility.

After cashing the trump ace, declarer should have played the king of trumps, and then the jack. If East had another diamond, declarer's defeat was inevitable from the start. If he didn't, whatever else he returned would permit South to pick up East's last trump, after which he would be able to dispose of his losing diamond on dummy's queen of clubs.

#### HAND 4

This deal is absurdly simple to play—and yet a renowned expert flubbed it.

		NORTH	
		♠	K 10 6 3
		♥	K J 10 8 3
		♦	J
		♣	A K 8
WEST		EAST	
♠	9 8 2	♠	—
♥	7 6 2	♥	A Q 9 5
♦	K Q 10 6 5 4 2	♦	9 7
♣	—	♣	J 9 7 6 5 3 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	A Q J 7 5 4
		♥	4
		♦	A 8 3
		♣	Q 10 4

South arrived at a *six spade* contract, against which West led the diamond king which was captured by declarer's ace.

At trick two South cashed the ace of trumps (and promptly entered the Hall of Shame). He then ruffed a diamond, returned to his own hand via the queen of trumps, and ruffed his remaining diamond with dummy's last trump, the king. When he then attempted to re-enter his own hand by means of the queen of clubs (to draw West's lone trump), West ruffed. A shift to hearts now enabled East to cash the setting trick.

Real tough luck, you say? Only a 7-0 break in clubs, plus a 3-0 break in spades could have defeated the slam as declarer played it. Tough luck, yes. But it was so simple to negate the tough luck, with no risk whatsoever.

Declarer should not have played the ace of trumps at trick two. Upon winning the opening lead with the diamond ace, a diamond should have been ruffed immediately, with a high trump, to make sure that East couldn't overruff. A low trump to the ace would then follow, after which declarer would ruff his last diamond high (the board's king and ten being used for the two diamond ruffs). Dummy's remaining trump would now be taken by South's queen, and the jack of trumps would fetch West's last trump. Declarer's only loser would be his singleton heart.

# HAND 5

Perhaps it is the spade suit as trumps that is a jinx to some declarers at a slam contract; or perhaps it was so intended by nature or destiny, to permit declarer to dig his own grave without the necessity of requisitioning the essential tool for the purpose; but here is a deal of exactly the same type as the immediately preceding—and our declarer committed the identical *faux pas* as his colleague on the previous deal. Our guilty expert is a prominent tournament player who doesn't slip very often.

		NORTH	
		♠	K 10 8 5
		♥	K J 9
		♦	J 10 8
		♣	A 10 7
WEST	EAST	SOUTH	
♠ J 9 7 2	♠ —	♠	A Q 6 4 3
♥ —	♥ 7 6 4 3 2	♥	A Q 10 8 5
♦ K 9 6 4 2	♦ A Q 7 5 3	♦	—
♣ K Q J 9	♣ 6 3 2	♣	8 5 4

Against South's *six spade* contract, West made the normal opening of the king of clubs, which was captured by dummy's ace. Declarer now led the five of trumps, which he won with his ace as East showed out. A low spade was then played, dummy's eight-spot winning (West having followed with the seven). A diamond was now trumped, after which declarer's next-to-last trump was led and East's jack finessed. A second round of diamonds was then ruffed by declarer's last trump, the queen.

At this point West had just the jack of trumps remaining, while dummy had the singleton king. But when declarer tried to reach dummy via a heart to pull West's last trump, West ruffed. He then cashed two high clubs to inflict a two-trick set on declarer.

Upon winning the ace of clubs at trick one, declarer should have ruffed a diamond at once. Then would come the ace of spades, after which the marked spade finesse would be taken through West. Another diamond would now be ruffed with the queen, and then declarer's last spade would be led, again trapping West's jack. Dummy's king of spades would now pick up West's last trump, and twelve tricks would be gathered in safety: the ace of clubs, two diamond ruffs in the South hand, four outright tricks in the trump suit, and the five top hearts.

## HAND 6

In the deal which follows, our expert declarer used poor judgment in playing to the first trick, and it *probably* cost him his slam contract. What makes this deal significant is that our South declarer was (and is) one of the leading players of the Italian World Championship Team.

NORTH			
♠	A K 10 9		
♥	A 10 9 3		
♦	J 4		
♣	K Q 4		
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 7 3 2	♠	6 5 4
♥	K J	♥	6
♦	6 5	♦	K Q 8 7
♣	J 10 7 3 2	♣	A 9 8 6 5
		SOUTH	
		♠	J 8
		♥	Q 8 7 5 4 2
		♦	A 10 9 3 2
		♣	—

Against South's *six heart* contract, West made the deceptive lead of the deuce of clubs (the fifth highest, as opposed to the generally accepted lead of the fourth highest). Declarer put up dummy's queen, East covered with the ace, and South ruffed. When the play was completed, declarer had lost a trump trick and a diamond.

If declarer had not played hurriedly to the first trick, he would have perceived that, in order to avoid the loss of a diamond trick, he needed four discards. With a favorable location of the spade queen, declarer could obtain two discards on dummy's spades. And if he could obtain two discards on the board's king and queen of clubs, he would avoid the loss of a diamond trick.

What *might have developed* if declarer had played the four of clubs at trick one (instead of the queen) will never be known. But I'd bet dollars to doughnuts that East would have played the ace. With the deuce of clubs being led—denoting a four-card suit—the evident “fact” was that declarer had a singleton club. How could East possibly have been that clairvoyant to have put up the eight-spot instead of the ace? Frankly, he couldn't afford to, if for no other reason than that he couldn't endure the derisive laughter of the world if declarer had possessed the singleton ten (or jack).

## HAND 7

The following deal arose in the National Team-of-Four Championships of 1946. The only excuse that one can offer for South's misplay is that he was tired after fourteen consecutive sessions of play in seven consecutive days—and, if this excuse is acceptable, I can attest to the fact that he was tired.

		NORTH	
		♠	J 10 8 4
		♥	9 6
		♦	A J
		♣	A Q 9 5 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	7	♠	K 6 3 2
♥	Q 10 8 5 2	♥	K 7 3
♦	K 10 9 3	♦	6 5 2
♣	10 6 2	♣	8 7 4
		SOUTH	
		♠	A Q 9 5
		♥	A J 4
		♦	Q 8 7 4
		♣	K J

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The five of hearts was opened and East's king fell to South's ace. A heart was played back, West winning with the ten-spot. West then shifted to the nine of diamonds, and declarer properly saw no necessity for risking the diamond finesse; and, simultaneously, he recognized that a successful spade finesse was a "must." So he climbed up with the board's ace of diamonds.

At trick four, the eight of spades was led, and it won the trick



when everybody followed with low spades. Next, the jack of spades was finessed, West showing out, after which the queen of spades was finessed.

Now declarer had a blackout: he cashed the king and jack of clubs and ruffed his last heart. Next came the ace of clubs, declarer discarding a diamond, and then the queen of clubs, which East trumped with the king. Declarer overruffed with the ace, but his contract was now irretrievably lost.

After winning the spade finesse with the queen (at trick six) declarer should then have ruffed his heart with dummy's remaining trump, returned to his own hand via the club king to play the trump ace, dropping East's king. The jack of clubs would then be overtaken by dummy's queen, after which the ace of clubs would drop the outstanding clubs, thus enabling declarer to get rid of all of his diamonds.

#### HAND 8

In amateur, inexpert circles, it is sometimes quite difficult, in a specific type of situation, to determine whether a player's error was due to a lack of knowledge or an unwarranted optimistic attitude. But in professional, expert circles, lack of knowledge is never (well, hardly ever) the cause of a mental aberration, since the expert is completely knowledgeable about correct technique. Hence his errors, in certain types of situations, can properly be charged to unwarranted optimism. It is a fact of life that this optimism has always been with us, amateurs and professionals alike; and, to amateurs and professionals alike, it can, and does, cause their downfall.

Here is a deal where an expert fell flat on his face because he naïvely trusted his opponents. The deal arose in the Vanderbilt Championships of 1946.

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NORTH					
♠	10 2		♠	—	
♥	9 8 6		♥	Q 5 2	
♦	9 7		♦	K Q 8 6 5 4 3	
♣	A Q J 9 8 6		♣	K 5 3	
WEST			EAST		
♠	8 5 4 3		♠	—	
♥	7 4 3		♥	Q 5 2	
♦	A J 10 2		♦	K Q 8 6 5 4 3	
♣	7 4		♣	K 5 3	
SOUTH					
♠	A K Q J 9 7 6		♠	—	
♥	A K J 10		♥	Q 5 2	
♦	—		♦	K Q 8 6 5 4 3	
♣	10 2		♣	K 5 3	

Against South's *six spade* contract, West opened the diamond ace, declarer ruffing. West's trumps were then picked up, after which the ten of clubs was led and finessed. It won the trick. Declarer then took another club finesse—and it didn't win. East returned the king of diamonds and eventually declarer lost a heart trick.

## HAND 9

In the preceding deal there was presented an illustration of what I described as unwarranted optimism or trusting the opponents, which led to self-destruction. Here is another illustration in the same vein, but this time permit me to call it as it should be called: the unreasonable greed of a declarer who got what he deserved:

			NORTH		
			♠ 8 7 5		
			♥ K Q		
			♦ A Q 7 2		
			♣ A K 5 2		
	WEST				EAST
♠	K 6 3			♠	Q J 4 2
♥	3			♥	J 6 2
♦	10 9 8 5			♦	K 6 3
♣	J 10 9 8 4			♣	Q 7 3
			SOUTH		
			♠ A 10 9		
			♥ A 10 9 8 7 5 4		
			♦ J 4		
			♣ 6		

Luckily for our South declarer, West didn't open a spade against the *six heart* contract. His opening lead of the club jack was taken by North's king, after which the king and queen of trumps were cashed. Now the ace of clubs was taken, South discarding a spade. A club was then ruffed, after which the ace of trumps picked up East's jack. Now came the jack of diamonds, which won the trick when everybody followed with low diamonds. Then, imbued with optimism, the queen of diamonds was finessed—and the walls came tumbling down.

Actually, in this case, declarer had no reason to be optimistic when the initial diamond finesse succeeded, for East figured to have the king of diamonds. Had West held this card, he surely would have played it on the jack.

Here, then, is justice: the punishment fitted the crime.

The next deal, and the two which follow it, technically do not belong in this book on how to play—and misplay—slam contracts, since these three deals are concerned with the *defense* against slam contracts, as contrasted to our theme of how *declarer* handles and mishandles slam contracts. I include them for fear that if I don't, our future historians may somehow fail to unearth them; and if any

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triumvirate of deals is worthy of nomination to Slamdom's Hall of Shame, this one is.

### HAND 10—Misdefense against a Slam

This deal arose in the World Championships of 1956, with the United States playing against Italy. Our West defender was one of our nation's—and of the world's—greatest players, but fate chose to pick this deal for him to develop a blind spot.

		NORTH	
		♠	A 9 5 2
		♥	6 3
		♦	10 8 2
		♣	9 7 4 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 10 8	♠	Q 6 4 3
♥	A K J 9 7 5 4	♥	10 2
♦	Q 5	♦	—
♣	8	♣	K Q J 10 6 5 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	K 7
		♥	Q 8
		♦	A K J 9 7 6 4 3
		♣	A

Neither side vulnerable. East dealer.

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
4 ♣	5 ♦	Pass	6 ♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West's king of hearts captured the opening lead, with East playing the deuce and South dropping the queen. West then shifted to the eight of clubs, East's bid suit. (Let not the reader recoil in horror. West's play was quite sound: East could have had the 10-8-2 of hearts, and South the singleton queen.)

Declarer won West's club shift and ran all of his trumps. East discarded his ten of hearts in plenty of time for everybody to know that he did not possess the eight-spot (with the 10-8-2, he would not

have discarded the ten-spot before the eight-spot). But somehow, West threw away all of his hearts to protect the J-10-8 of spades, resulting in declarer's eight of hearts developing into his slam-going trick.

# HAND 11—Misdefense against a Slam

This deal was described in the *Bridge World* about ten years ago.<sup>1</sup> I quote the source for fear that if I didn't, people might think that I created the hand.

			NORTH		
			♠ 4 3 2		
			♥ K		
			♦ A K Q 6 5 2		
			♣ A Q J		
	WEST			EAST	
♠ K				♠ Q 10 8 5	
♥ 9 6 5				♥ 8 7 4 3 2	
♦ J 10 9 8 7 4 3				♦ —	
♣ 7 3				♣ 9 8 6 5	
			SOUTH		
			♠ A J 9 7 6		
			♥ A Q J 10		
			♦ —		
			♣ K 10 4 2		

South arrived at a *seven spade* contract (I don't know what the bidding was—and if I knew it I wouldn't believe it). West led the jack of diamonds, which was covered by dummy's queen. East ruffed with the five of spades, and declarer overruffed with the six. A club was then led to the ace, after which North's king of diamonds was led. Again East ruffed, this time with the eight-spot, and declarer overruffed with the nine-spot. Next came the ten of hearts, taken by the board's king. The ace of diamonds was now played, and again East ruffed—with the ten-spot! Declarer, of course, overruffed with the jack, laid down his ace of trumps, and caught West's king and East's queen!!!

<sup>1</sup> May, 1951, p. 8.

## HAND 12—Misdefense against a Slam

This final deal on the subject of the nomination of fitting candidates to Slamdom's Hall of Shame has as its moral: Don't get cute, just for a lark. If you do, you'll perish ignominiously, as did our East defender. The deal was played in 1934, at Crockford's Club, in New York City.

NORTH			
♠	A		
♥	A 10 9 6 5		
♦	A Q J 10 6		
♣	A 5		
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 9 8	♠	Q 10 3 2
♥	Q J	♥	8 3 2
♦	K 9 8 7	♦	5 4
♣	9 8 7 6	♣	K 4 3 2
SOUTH			
♠	K 7 6 5 4		
♥	K 7 4		
♦	3 2		
♣	Q J 10		

North-South vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
<i>H. Schenken</i>		<i>W. Malowan</i>	
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	6 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened a low club, and East captured the trick with his king when dummy played low. A club return was then made, taken by the board's ace.

The contract appeared rather hopeless, and South was more or less resigned to defeat. At trick three he led a low heart to his king—

and East false-carded with the eight-spot as West dropped the jack. The diamond finesse was now taken, successfully. The ace of hearts was then laid down, dropping West's queen. Declarer's seven of hearts had just become a future re-entry to the South hand.

South now cashed dummy's ace of spades, came back to his own hand via the seven of hearts, played the king of spades and discarded one of dummy's diamonds. This was followed by the high queen of clubs, another diamond being discarded from the North hand. And then the diamond finesse was repeated, to bring home the slam contract. All in all, declarer made two spade tricks, five hearts, three diamonds, and two clubs.

Had East not false-carded with the eight of hearts, declarer could never have utilized the seven of hearts as a re-entry to the South hand, to take the second diamond finesse. Why did East do it? The only reason I can think of is that he yearned to get himself nominated to the Hall of Shame. He succeeded.

# 3

## HOW HEROES BECOME HEROES

According to Webster, a hero is defined as a man of distinguished valor, intrepidity, or enterprise in danger. In turn, *valor* is defined as strength of mind in regard to danger, that quality which enables a man to encounter danger with firmness and resolution; *intrepidity* is defined as firm courage which shrinks not amid the most appalling dangers; *enterprise* is defined as ardor in entering upon and carrying forward projects or movements requiring daring and energy. Heroism calls into exercise one or more of the above modifications of courage.

With respect to heroism at the bridge table, I would like to extend the meaning and interpretation of the word *hero* to include the characteristic "logical." I appreciate that *logic* often has nothing to do with an act of heroism; as a matter of fact, in the normal interpretation of the word *hero* it conveys a physical, rather than a mental, connotation: a spur-of-the-moment reflex action, rather than a thought-out, logical decision, is the guiding motivation. In bridge, however, logic (the science of reasoning) is always the prime attribute of the hero.

Let us now view the individual heroic exploits of our best bridge players—exploits which, in my opinion, deserve the plaudits of the on-lookers.

### HAND 1

A most simple deal, which nevertheless could perhaps serve as the model for would-be heroes to emulate, is the following:



	NORTH	
	♠ 9 8	
	♥ Q 10	
	♦ K J 9 5 4	
	♣ K J 5 2	
WEST		EAST
♠ 6 4		♠ 7 5
♥ K 7 6 3 2		♥ 9 8 5 4
♦ Q 7 6 2		♦ A 10 8 3
♣ 9 6		♣ 8 7 3
	SOUTH	
	♠ A K Q J 10 3 2	
	♥ A J	
	♦ —	
	♣ A Q 10 4	

South, Alfred Sheinwold, found himself in the overly optimistic contract of *seven spades*. West opened the nine of clubs, which declarer won with his *ace*. A low trump was then led to the eight, after which a diamond was ruffed high. Then followed another low spade to dummy's nine, and another diamond was ruffed.

Now came the queen of clubs, which was overtaken by the board's king (no possible risk, since declarer still possessed the jack and ten). A third round of diamonds was then ruffed. The ten of clubs was led next, and overtaken by the board's jack. (Again no risk, since the adverse clubs had been revealed as being divided 3-2.) A fourth round of diamonds was now ruffed, establishing dummy's king when East's ace fell.

The four of clubs was then led to the board's five-spot, and on the king of diamonds declarer discarded his losing heart. The heart finesse was now unnecessary—for which declarer was most grateful.

If West's opening club lead is not won with the ace, the contract will be defeated, for declarer will then be unable to reach dummy five times: four times to ruff diamonds, and the fifth time to cash the king.

## HAND 2

Generally speaking, the non-expert will discard a loser at the first

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opportunity he has to do so, as though it were a hot potato. The expert, on the other hand, has learned to control his instinctive desires and not to get frantic under fire. Here is a case in point.

		NORTH	
		♠	J 8 6
		♥	K 5 2
		♦	10 9 7
		♣	J 9 5 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	5 3	♠	A 7
♥	A 10 9 7	♥	Q J 8 6 4 3
♦	Q 6 3	♦	8 4 2
♣	10 8 7 4	♣	Q 6
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q 10 9 4 2
		♥	—
		♦	A K J 5
		♣	A K 2

Against South's *six spade* contract, West led the ace of hearts, declarer ruffing. The king of trumps was then led, East taking his ace and returning a heart. Most declarers would now discard the deuce of clubs, and pin their hopes on a diamond finesse.

Our declarer, Norman Kay, of Philadelphia, was in no hurry to obtain a discard. He ruffed the heart with the queen of spades. He then led the ten of spades, removing the adverse trumps. Now came the ace and king of clubs—and when East's queen dropped, Norman was home. He led his deuce of clubs, finessed West for the ten; and on the jack of clubs and the king of hearts, he discarded his five and jack of diamonds.

If you think Norman was lucky to catch East with the doubleton queen of clubs, you're right. But it cost him nothing to test the club situation; and if things had not turned out so nicely, he would have gotten to the board via the trump jack, discarded his club on the king of hearts—and then gone down a trick if the diamond finesse didn't work.

# HAND 3

Here is the identical theme of not taking a discard immediately, but this time in a different guise. Our imaginative South declarer was my very good friend, the late Lester Glucksman, of New York City.

				NORTH							
				♠	Q 10 5 4						
				♥	<del>Q 9 6 3</del>						
				♦	<del>J 7</del>						
				♣	A 8 3						
WEST						EAST					
♠	A 8 7 3					♠	J 9 2				
♥	—					♥	<del>5 2</del>				
♦	<del>Q 10 8 3</del>					♦	<del>K 6 2</del>				
♣	K Q J 10 5					♣	9 7 6 4 2				
						SOUTH					
						♠	K 6				
						♥	<del>A K J 10 8 7 4</del>				
						♦	<del>A 9 5 4</del>				
						♣	—				
SOUTH						WEST		NORTH		EAST	
1 ♥		2 ♣		2 ♥		Pass		Pass		Pass	
6 ♥		Pass		Pass		Pass		Pass		Pass	

The opening lead of the king of clubs was ruffed by Lester. Trumps were drawn in two rounds, after which the six of spades was led, West followed with the three, and North's queen was played, holding the trick. It now became routine play, the king of spades being discarded on the club ace. A diamond was then conceded to the opposition, after which declarer's two losing diamond losers were ruffed with dummy's two remaining trumps.

Had West taken his spade ace, declarer would still have fulfilled his contract, for the king and queen of spades would have dropped East's jack, resulting in the establishment of dummy's ten-spot of

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spades. Declarer would then have been able to discard the three diamond losers on the queen and ten of spades and on the ace of clubs.

### HAND 4

On this deal we have the continuing theme of taking a discard. This time, however, logic dictated that it be done quickly. To the untrained eye, the discard might not have been apparent; and this would have been a costly oversight.

			NORTH		
			♠ K 10 8		
			♥ J 8 6 2		
			♦ 8		
			♣ A K J 5 4		
	WEST				EAST
	♠ J 7 6 5 2				♠ Q 9 4 3
	♥ A				♥ 5 4 3
	♦ 6 3				♦ 10 9 7 4 2
	♣ Q 10 9 8 2				♣ 7
			SOUTH		
			♠ A		
			♥ K Q 10 9 7		
			♦ A K Q J 5		
			♣ 6 3		

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♣	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Our South declarer was Lew Mathe, of California, one of the world's finest players. West opened the eight of clubs, which was captured by North's king. The eight of spades was then led to the ace. The jack of diamonds was led next. The five of diamonds was then ruffed in dummy, and on the king of spades Lew discarded his remaining club. *Now* a trump was led, and all the defenders could take was the ace of trumps.

Here, in my opinion, is an example of greatness: the realization, when West led a club despite the rebid in that suit by North, that West either had a singleton club and was hoping to get in a ruff; or that West was trying to give his partner a ruff. Hence, the necessity of getting rid of South's remaining club before touching trumps. How many bridge players would have risen to the occasion?

# HAND 5

Frequently, heroes become heroes out of desperation. They find themselves with their backs to the wall, with very little hope of escape. But they neither panic nor quit. They search, find, and accept their only chance, and resolutely go about the task of extricating themselves.

On this deal, our declarer, Simon ("Skippy") Becker, of Philadelphia, had to toss a trick out of the window to have a chance for survival.

		NORTH	
		♠	A K 7 6 2
		♥	A-K Q 6 5 4
		♦	5
		♣	3
WEST	EAST	SOUTH	
♠ 9 8	♠ J 10 5 3	♠	Q 4
♥ 10 8 7 3	♥ J 9 2	♥	—
♦ K J 9 6	♦ 8 4 3 2	♦	A Q 10 7
♣ K 5 4	♣ Q 7	♣	A J 10 9 8 6 2

"Skippy" landed in a *six no-trump* contract. When West opened the spade nine, it became obvious that even if the six adverse spades broke 3-3, he could make only five spades, three hearts, one club, and two diamonds (*if* the diamond finesse was successful), for a total of eleven tricks.

So he seized upon the only hope: that East had been dealt either

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the doubleton queen or doubleton king of clubs. He won the opening lead with the king of spades, led the three of clubs, and covered East's seven with the eight. West took this trick with the king and returned his remaining spade, which Skippy won with the board's ace (dropping his own queen). He next cashed the ace, king, and queen of hearts (discarding three diamonds). He re-entered his own hand via the diamond ace, plunked down the ace of clubs, closed his eyes—and opened them, to behold East's queen on the table.

### HAND 6

If there is one predominant characteristic that differentiates the expert from the rank-and-file bridge player, it is the former's ability—like that of the chess master—to be able to look ahead and perceive what may develop; and if the development can be detrimental to his well-being, to take immediate steps to prevent it.

On the deal which follows, our hero was Mike Michaels, a frequent partner of mine until he decided to transplant himself to Miami, Florida.

		NORTH	
		♠ A 7 6 5	
		♥ 10 9 4	
		♦ Q 6 4	
		♣ A Q 5	
WEST			EAST
♠ K Q J			♠ 10 8 4 3 2
♥ J 8 6 3			♥ 7
♦ K 10 9 3 2			♦ J 8 5
♣ 10			♣ 9 8 3 2
		SOUTH	
		♠ 9	
		♥ A K Q 5 2	
		♦ A 7	
		♣ K J 7 6 4	

Mike was playing a *six heart* contract. West opened the king of spades, which was won by North's ace, and a low spade was promptly returned and ruffed in the South hand. The ace and king of trumps

were now led, revealing that West had a sure trump trick. The queen of trumps was then cashed, after which a club was led to dummy's ace.

Now Mike ruffed another spade, with his last trump. He then led clubs, and West could trump whenever he wished—but when he did he would have no choice but to lead away from his king of diamonds, thus giving declarer two diamond tricks.

Had Mike not had the foresight to ruff a spade at trick two, West, upon ruffing a club, would have led a spade. Declarer would then have been compelled to lose a diamond trick to West's king.

## HAND 7

As a bridge teacher, one of the problems I run into in forming homogeneous classes, is classifying potential pupils according to their knowledge of the game. For pupils who are relatively advanced, I invariably use the following deal to test their knowledge of play. The deal was played some years ago by the late Geoffrey Mott-Smith.

			NORTH		
			♠ K 5		
			♥ 9 8 3 2		
			♦ 4 3		
			♣ Q J 10 9 4		
WEST					EAST
♠ A					♠ 4 3 2
♥ K Q J 7 4					♥ 10 6 5
♦ J 10 7 5					♦ 8 6
♣ K 3 2					♣ A 8 7 6 5
			SOUTH		
			♠ Q J 10 9 8 7 6		
			♥ A		
			♦ A K Q 9 2		
			♣ —		

South is playing a *six spade* contract.

The “poor” student-to-be wins the opening lead of the king of hearts, and promptly plays a trump. The queen of hearts is then

returned by West, declarer trumps, pulls the remaining trumps—and then goes down when the adverse diamonds fail to break.

The “good” student-to-be wins the opening heart lead, plays the ace and king of diamonds, and then ruffs a third diamond with the king of trumps (sometimes with the five-spot). He then plays dummy’s remaining trump, West wins—and returns a diamond which East ruffs. Down one.

The “very good” student-to-be (I haven’t found him yet!) wins the opening lead of the heart king, plays the ace and king of diamonds, and ruffs a diamond. He returns to his own hand by ruffing a heart, and trumps another diamond. He then comes back to the South hand by ruffing a club. He now lays down the queen of spades—and chalks up a small slam.

## HAND 8

The story which follows—in which our anonymous South declarer became a hero in more ways than one—is taken verbatim from the *Bridge World*.<sup>1</sup> I think the reader will find it both entertaining and instructive.

## A DUPLICATE BOOMERANG

Ben Allen was the cardroom bore. He was a fanatic on the subject of duplicate bridge. He could talk of nothing but duplicate, and his reserve stock of chatter seemed inexhaustible. Ordinary bridge, the rubber variety, he held in contempt. He not only never played it himself; he would not even stoop to watch a rubber bridge game.

Yet one afternoon, after his last unwilling victim had edged his way into the corridor, Ben Allen flung himself down in an easy chair near a table where a rubber bridge game was in progress. A quick survey of the room had disclosed no other vacant easy chair and he was a bit fagged. He settled back comfortably, closed his eyes, and yawned.

The usual group of onlookers was gathered around the players, but the hands were colorless for some time. Then one of the players jumped to four no-trump, using the Blackwood Convention.

With this bid, the gallery came to life. One of them, in an effort to see the cards, trod on Ben Allen’s extended foot and rudely

<sup>1</sup> *Bridge World*, Feb., 1946, pp. 33-34.



wakened him. Ben was about to protest violently when he noticed the tension around the table.

He heard the crisp response of five spades and pulled himself forward to watch. The hand he saw, and the bidding he heard, were as follows:

♠ A K Q J 9 6 4 2  
♥ 6 4  
♦ K  
♣ 7 2

OPENER	RESPONDER
1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♣	4 NT
5 ♠	5 NT
6 ♦	7 ♠

It was at this point in the proceedings that Ben Allen went violently into action and hurled his boomerang.

"Seven no-trump, you dern fool!" he shrieked. "Seven no-trump! Can't you see that you've got a grand slam in no-trump?"

"What of it?" replied the declarer, shrugging the pest off his neck. "What about the hundred honors in spades?"

"What's honors got to do with it? A sure grand slam in no-trump ruined!"

At this point the jack of clubs was led, and both our kibitzer and declarer found themselves gazing at:

NORTH  
♠ 10 8  
♥ A K 10 8 5  
♦ A  
♣ A Q 9 6 5

SOUTH  
♠ A K Q J 9 6 4 2  
♥ 6 4  
♦ K  
♣ 7 2

Declarer noted that he could not get the expected discard on the diamond ace, and that he would therefore have to work for his thirteenth trick. He turned to Ben and asked derisively, "Where's your grand slam in no-trump?"

Then he set about his task in masterly fashion. Playing the club ace, he took one round of trumps as a precautionary measure, and then led the ace and king of hearts, both opponents following suit. The third heart he trumped with the ace of spades, and, as one defender showed out of hearts, he entered dummy via the ten of trumps and ruffed a fourth heart. He then spread his hand, the fifth heart having become promoted into a winner.

When the defenders tossed their remaining cards on the table, Ben Allen reached over and picked up the club king from the opening leader's exposed hand. With a triumphant leer, he slammed it back on the table and addressed the declarer:

"You see! If you had had the guts to finesse the club queen on the first trick, you could have made a grand slam at *no-trump!*"

He hurried from the room, and the players shook their heads dolefully. "Finesses have no business working for a guy like that," said declarer sadly. "Now we'll *never* be able to shut him up."

The last two deals in this chapter, Hands 9 and 10, might properly be entitled: "Thank you, Mr. Defender." However, the assistance by the defenders should in no way be permitted to detract from the splendid play of each of the two South declarers who, in bringing home their contracts, demonstrated their ingenuity—and became heroes.

HAND 9—"Thank you, Mr. Defender"

		NORTH	
		♠	10 4
		♥	Q 9 7 5
		♦	J 10 6 4 3
		♣	K 10
WEST		EAST	
♠	9 3	♠	A 6
♥	6	♥	K 2
♦	K 9 8 2	♦	A Q 7 5
♣	J 9 7 5 4 3	♣	A Q 8 6 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q J 8 7 5 2
		♥	A J 10 8 4 3
		♦	—
		♣	—

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Double
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Double
Pass	4 NT	Pass	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	6 ♣	Pass	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opened the deuce of diamonds, and declarer ruffed the trick. South then led the *queen* of spades—and East took it with the ace! Declarer was now enabled to reach dummy via the spade ten, to take the heart finesse successfully, and to fulfill his contract.

That East should not have taken the spade queen is obvious. Possibly he took it because he thought his partner had the king; and that if he didn't take it, his ace and partner's king would fall on the next lead of the spade suit. But, whatever the reason for his aberration, I'll wager that if declarer had led the *king* (instead of the queen) East would *not* have taken it with his ace.

## HAND 10—"Thank you, Mr. Defender"

I would estimate that 95 per cent of our nation's bridge players, upon seeing the dummy in the slam deal which follows, would have "saved time" by stating: "Down one." Our declarer chose to maintain silence, play out the hand, and you know what? He fulfilled his contract.

		NORTH	
		♠	10 8 6 2
		♥	J 10 5
		♦	A 8
		♣	A K Q 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	5	♠	J 4
♥	A 9 3	♥	K 7 6 2
♦	Q J 10 9 6 3	♦	7 5 4
♣	J 7 6	♣	10 9 8 4
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K Q 9 7 3
		♥	Q 8 4
		♦	K 2
		♣	5 2

Against South's *six spade* contract, West opened the diamond queen which was taken by dummy's ace. The jack of hearts was then led, and West won the trick with his ace when East and South played low. West continued the diamond suit, declarer's king winning. Declarer now ran his trumps, and arrived at this position at the completion of trick eight:

NORTH					
♠	—		♠	—	
♥	10		♥	K	
♦	—		♦	—	
♣	A K Q 3		♣	10 9 8 4	
WEST			EAST		
♠	—		♠	—	
♥	9 3		♥	K	
♦	—		♦	—	
♣	J 7 6		♣	10 9 8 4	
SOUTH					
♠	3				
♥	Q 8				
♦	—				
♣	5 2				

Declarer now led his last trump, discarding the heart ten from dummy. East was “dead”: If he discarded the heart king, South’s queen would become a winner; if, instead, he discarded a club, North’s three of clubs would be promoted into declarer’s slam-going trick.

# 4

## HOW HEROES BECOME EX-HEROES

In all competitive endeavors, there are those individuals who are brilliant at times, and unbrilliant at other times. Generally, they are described as being erratic or inconsistent.

And so it is at the bridge table, where, on some given deal, a performer comes up with a stroke of genius; and on the next deal performs like a novice.

This chapter concerns itself with the expert—the proven brilliant hero—at his worst. The illustrative deals depict our heroes when they played like novices; and in the eyes and minds of the spectators, our erstwhile heroes became ex-heroes.

If any lessons—for future application—are to be derived from the exhibitions which will be presented, they should be (1) the realization that not even our “cream of the crop” is perfect at all times; and (2) that one becomes a winner not by being brilliant, but, rather, by not getting careless on the repetitive, run-of-the-mill hands. This latter point can be confirmed by checking with our experts, who will tell you that tournaments are won by those who make the fewest blunders or errors.

## HAND 1

NORTH					
♠	K J 3		♠	Q 9 7 5	
♥	A		♥	9 8 7 3	
♦	K J 7 4 3		♦	Q 10 8	
♣	9 8 4 3		♣	6 5	
WEST			EAST		
♠	2				
♥	J 10 6 5 2				
♦	9 5 2				
♣	A 10 7 2				
SOUTH					
♠	A 10 8 6 4				
♥	K Q 4				
♦	A 6				
♣	K Q J				

South arrived at a *six spade* contract, with no adverse bidding. The opening lead of the heart five was taken by dummy's ace. A trump was then led to declarer's ace, and a trump returned, with the intention of finessing West for the queen. When West failed to follow suit, declarer had to go down, since the loss of a club trick and a trump trick was now inevitable.

The reader may raise the question: "What did declarer do that was wrong, except to guess badly? Could not West, instead of East, have held the trump queen, in which case the finesse would have been successful?"

There is no doubt that West was just as likely to have held the spade queen as was East. But the key point is that if West held four trumps headed by the queen, *he could not be prevented from making a trump trick*. But if East held four trumps to the queen, then by leading dummy's king and following up with the jack, declarer would avoid the loss of a trump trick. If, on the lead of the jack, East covered with the queen, declarer would take it with his ace. And, with West showing out, it would now become routine to entrap East's nine of trumps.

## HAND 2

About the least offensive thing that one can say about South's play of the next deal is that, by his line of play, he insulted the expert who was sitting in the West seat.

		NORTH	
		♠	A
		♥	4 2
		♦	A J 10 9 8 4 3
		♣	7 5 2
WEST	EAST		
♠ J 10 9 8 2	♠ 6 5		
♥ 9 8 7	♥ J 10 5 3		
♦ K 7	♦ Q 6		
♣ K 4 3	♣ J 10 9 8 6		
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q 7 4 3
		♥	A K Q 6
		♦	5 2
		♣	A Q

South landed in a contract of *six no-trump*, against which West led the jack of spades, North's ace winning. Declarer entered his own hand via the heart ace, and led a low diamond. When West promptly put up the king, he was permitted to win the trick.

West returned a spade, declarer taking it with his king. He then played his remaining diamond, West followed with the seven-spot, and after due deliberation, declarer played—*the nine!* Bye-bye diamond suit, and bye-bye contract. Down five.

Had a beginner been sitting West, declarer's play might be acceptable. But against an expert, it had to be wrong, for no expert, sitting West and holding the K-Q-7 of diamonds, would have played the king of diamonds on the initial lead of the suit. He would automatically have put up the seven, which would guarantee that declarer would never make more than two diamond tricks (unless declarer held the three missing diamonds, in which case de-



clarer could always make six diamond tricks, no matter what West played).

So, simply, declarer used poor judgment.

### HAND 3

I find it rather difficult to criticize declarer for his play of the next deal. Perhaps he should not be criticized. But how well I remember when our South declarer told his teammates what had happened—and, at that moment, in *their* eyes, he had just become a fallen hero. So let's set our time-machine back to August, 1956, to the National Team-of-Four Championships.

NORTH			
♠ —			
♥ Q 8 6 5			
♦ A K 10 9 7 4 3			
♣ A Q			
WEST		EAST	
♠ A K J 9 3		♠ Q 10 6 5 2	
♥ J 10 2		♥ K	
♦ 5		♦ 6 2	
♣ K 8 7 2		♣ J 10 6 4 3	
SOUTH			
♠ 8 7 4			
♥ A 9 7 4 3			
♦ Q J 8			
♣ 9 5			
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1 ♠	Double	4 ♠	5 ♥
Pass	6 ♥	Double (!)	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened the spade king, which was ruffed in dummy. Hoping—from East's double—that East held the K-J-2 or K-10-2 of trumps, which would leave West with the singleton ten or jack, declarer then led the board's queen of trumps. East covered with the king, declarer

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played the ace, and West followed with the deuce. Declarer's sole hope now was that the four adverse trumps had been divided 2-2. So he led another trump, which West took with the ten-spot. West then cashed the trump jack, removing dummy's remaining trump, after which the defenders grabbed two spade tricks. Down 800! (South was vulnerable.)

And who are we that we can criticize East's double, for had he not made that bid, declarer would have walked in with his contract—as was done when the board was replayed, without the double.

### HAND 4

The deal which follows is a striking example of carelessness by a declarer who should have known better.

		NORTH	
		♠	K Q 10 2
		♥	A K 8
		♦	A J 9
		♣	A 8 5
		WEST	
		♠	J 8 6 5
		♥	9
		♦	6 4 3 2
		♣	J 10 9 2
		EAST	
		♠	3
		♥	J 10 7 5 3 2
		♦	K 8 7
		♣	7 4 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A 9 7 4
		♥	Q 6 4
		♦	Q 10 5
		♣	K Q 6

Against South's *six no-trump* contract, West opened the club jack, which was taken by declarer's queen. The diamond finesse was then tried, losing to East's king, after which East returned a diamond, which declarer won with his queen. He then decided to lead a spade to dummy's king. On this trick, West followed with the eight-spot, and East played the three.

Noting the eight-spot, declarer concluded that either it was a singleton or it came from the J-8 doubleton combination. If it were

the latter, then the jack would fall on the next trick. So he led dummy's spade queen—and West's jack became the setting trick.

As was stated, declarer was just plain careless, which, in expert circles, is tantamount to high treason against expertdom. After losing the diamond finesse, he should have cashed his clubs, hearts, and diamonds. It would then have been revealed that East had started with six hearts, at least three diamonds, and at least three clubs; and, hence, he couldn't have more than one spade. When declarer would then have led the king of spades, East's three-spot would have had to have been a singleton—and West would have been marked with the spade jack.

# HAND 5

On this deal, a neat false-card by a defender talked declarer out of taking the winning line of play. But the fault was all declarer's, for he never should have given the defender the opportunity to make his false-card.

NORTH					
♠	A J 5		♠	Q 9 8 2	
♥	A K Q 10		♥	7 6 5	
♦	K Q 4 3		♦	J 7 5	
♣	7 2		♣	K J 6	
WEST			EAST		
♠	10 7 4		♠	Q 9 8 2	
♥	9 4 2		♥	7 6 5	
♦	10 9 8 2		♦	J 7 5	
♣	10 4 3		♣	K J 6	
			SOUTH		
			♠	K 6 3	
			♥	J 8 3	
			♦	A 6	
			♣	A Q 9 8 5	

South, a well-known player, reached a *six no-trump* contract. West led a diamond, which declarer captured with his ace. Declarer now ran four hearts, everybody discarding a spade on the fourth heart. The club finesse was then taken, successfully. The ace of clubs was

played next—and East dropped the *king*. Declarer was now afraid to lead a third round of clubs, for fear that West held the jack and ten. So he took the spade finesse, which lost to East's queen.

The correct play should have been found by declarer. After the club finesse won, declarer should have led a *small club*, not the *ace*. Regardless of who won this trick (hypothetically), declarer could capture any return, and now he would cash the ace of clubs. If the clubs were revealed as being divided 3-3, there would be no further problem, for his remaining clubs would then be high. And, if the clubs weren't divided 3-3, then he could resort to the spade finesse. On this deal, of course, the spade finesse would have been unnecessary.

HAND 6

This deal arose a few decades ago, and it has become a classic type of hand to demonstrate that even the best players have blind spots. Yet, with regard to the expert who played the deal originally, he cannot claim a blind spot as an excuse for his misplay, for blind spots are for mere mortals, not for experts.

		NORTH			
		♠	Q J		
		♥	Q 8		
		♦	A J 7 5 2		
		♣	J 10 9 6		
WEST				EAST	
♠	8 7 4 3			♠	K 6 5 2
♥	J 10 9 5 2			♥	K 6 4
♦	6 3			♦	K 4
♣	7 2			♣	8 5 4 3
		SOUTH			
		♠	A 10 9		
		♥	A 7 3		
		♦	Q 10 9 8		
		♣	A K Q		

South landed in a *six diamond* contract. West opened the jack of hearts, dummy's queen was put up, covered by East's king, and taken by South's ace. The "normal" trump finesse was then at-

tempted. When it lost to East's king, East returned a heart, and West cashed the setting trick.

Take another look at the North-South hands. Doesn't the fate of the contract depend on whether the spade finesse is successful or not? What difference whether the trump finesse wins if the spade finesse loses? Should the latter occur, won't declarer be compelled to lose a spade and a heart?

Declarer should lead the diamond queen at trick two, and overtake it with dummy's ace. Now the spade finesse is taken. If it wins, it is repeated, and the board's losing heart can then be discarded on declarer's high spade. If it loses, your conscience will be clear; and your defeat can be charged to circumstances beyond your control.

## HAND 7

This deal came up in the Vanderbilt Championships of 1950, and our declarer went down at his slam contract. When the hand was submitted to other experts, the consensus was that declarer didn't give himself the best chance.

		NORTH			
		♠	4 3		
		♥	K Q 8 2		
		♦	A Q J		
		♣	A Q 4 2		
				EAST	
WEST		♠	Q J 8		
		♥	J 6 5		
		♦	7 6 5 4		
		♣	K 8 3		
				SOUTH	
		♠	A 10 7 6 5		
		♥	A 7 4 3		
		♦	K 2		
		♣	J 10		

The contract was *six hearts*, with South as declarer. West's ten of diamonds opening was won by declarer's king, after which he drew three rounds of trumps, ending up in the South hand.

Declarer's problem was whether to try the club finesse or to play for the adverse spades to be divided 3-3. If the club finesse worked, a spade would be his only loser. On the other hand, if spades broke 3-3, and declarer attacked spades, again a spade would be his only loser, since one of his clubs could always be discarded on dummy's third diamond.

At the table, declarer elected to take the club finesse, figuring that the 50-50 finesse had a better chance of succeeding than the 36 per cent chance that spades would break 3-3.

The opinion of the experts was that declarer should have led the jack of clubs, and that if West didn't cover with the king (an expert West *would cover*), to overtake the jack with the ace, discard the ten of clubs on dummy's high diamond; and then stake everything on an even split of the adverse spades.

## HAND 8

From the day we are born, we have drilled into us that we should draw the defenders' trumps as soon as we get the lead. This is usually winning technique, but there are times when it can be losing technique. Here is an example of when the complete drawing of trumps should have been deferred. But our expert declarer just didn't think of it at the time—and he went the way of all flesh.

		NORTH	
		♠	8 7 2
		♥	Q J
		♦	A J 10
		♣	K Q J 5 2
WEST		EAST	
♠	5 4 3	♠	6
♥	10 9 8 7	♥	6 5 4 3 2
♦	K 5	♦	Q 8 7 6 4 3
♣	A 10 9 8	♣	7
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K Q J 10 9
		♥	A K
		♦	9 2
		♣	6 4 3

South was playing a *six spade* contract. He took West's opening heart lead and drew trumps in three rounds. He then led a club, West followed with the eight, and dummy's jack won the trick. The South hand was re-entered via a heart, and another club led, West putting up the nine, dummy's queen winning as East showed out. And now declarer couldn't get back to his own hand—and was forced to lose a club and a diamond.

Declarer's correct play was to draw *only two rounds* of trumps (East failing to follow on the second round). Then, after dummy's jack won the initial club lead, South could re-enter his own hand via the third trump to lead a second club; and then to return again by means of a heart to lead a third club. Played in this manner, he either would avoid the loss of a club trick, or be able to discard his losing diamond on the board's high club.

There was no serious risk in this line of play. If West were void of clubs, or had a singleton, the contract was unmakeable against good defenders.

## HAND 9

This deal was garnered in conversation with Tobias Stone, who was kibitzing the late Phil Abramsohn when the hand arose. The South declarer was a good player (although it will be hard to believe after you view his performance; this happened to be one of his off-days). The story, and the accompanying analysis, are taken from *Bridge World*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jan., 1947, pp. 18–19.

		NORTH	
		♠ 7 6 4 3	
		♥ 10 8 5 4	
		♦ 6	
		♣ Q J 10 4	
WEST			EAST
♠ A Q 8 2			♠ —
♥ K Q 9 6 2			♥ A J 7 3
♦ 8 5			♦ Q J 9 4
♣ 7 3			♣ 9 8 6 5 2
	SOUTH		
	♠ K J 10 9 5		
	♥ —		
	♦ A K 10 7 3 2		
	♣ A K		

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2 ♦	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♣	Pass	5 ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble	Pass	Pass	Pass

Some might think South's redouble optimistic [*I do. FLK*]. The actual declarer did not think so. He expected his partner to have something like four spades to the queen, and he supposed the double was based on top hearts plus the trump ace. In fact he was so convinced he had a good thing that he turned to Abramsohn, who held the West cards, and asked, "Do you want an extra on this one?"

"No," said Abramsohn, "I don't like to take money from the blind. But I'll tell you what." At this point he very deliberately took the watch from his wrist and set it down on the table. "You don't have to put up a thing. But if you make this hand, you can keep the watch!"

This little incident attracted a bit of attention, and several players interrupted their games to walk over to Abramsohn's table. He



waited until kibitzers were three deep around the table, and then led the king of hearts.

As soon as the dummy went down, Abramsohn breathed a bit easier. There had been a bare possibility that dummy would show up with some spade combination headed by the king. As it was, nothing could prevent him from taking two trump tricks. So he reached for his watch and began to put it back on his wrist.

"Leave that watch on the table," said South. "I'm going to wrap this hand right around your neck!"

Declarer sounded a bit more confident than he actually felt. But, after all, if he found the queen of spades in the East hand, he could make the slam. All he needed was a reasonable break in diamonds and spades, with the spade queen onside. It was still not impossible that Abramsohn had doubled with the A-K of hearts and the ace of trumps.

Abramsohn put the watch back on the table to await the outcome. South ruffed the heart triumphantly, and Abramsohn managed to look a bit worried. Declarer next cashed the diamond ace, and ruffed a diamond in dummy. Then he led a trump from dummy, anxiously awaiting East's play.

East discarded a club, of course, and South clutched his lower jaw and picked it up from the floor. Then he mournfully played the nine of spades.

Abramsohn took the queen and ace of spades at once, and then led another heart. This obliged South to ruff, and now he had one trump in his own hand and one in dummy. Declarer had won four tricks and feared that he might win only four more unless the diamonds were split 3-3. The 3-3 split would enable him to cash the diamond king, discarding dummy's third heart, and then lead a good diamond. Even if West overruffed dummy, the last heart could then be discarded, and then South would win the rest. It would be a two-trick set, by far the best he could hope for.

When South laid down the king of diamonds, Abramsohn promptly ruffed with the eight of spades. Since his partner had carefully signalled diamond strength by playing the nine on the first round and the four-spot on the second, Abramsohn led back his deuce of spades.

Declarer could have cashed his two high clubs, but he still desperately hoped to salvage something from the wreckage. He led a low diamond, hoping East would return a club or that the hearts were blocked. But the hearts were not blocked. East took his queen of diamonds, and then the ace and another heart permitted West to take the rest of the suit.

Abramsohn gave up the last trick to South, scored up 3400 points, and pointed to his watch. "Is it all right if I put it on now?" he asked.

## 5

### TO DECLARER: MY CONDOLENCES

Is there any bridge player in this world who, while playing out a hand with apparently sound logic, has not suddenly had his world collapse from under him when he belatedly perceived that his adversaries had put one over on him? Is there one of us who, in seeking and finding apparently meaningful clues from the bidding or the play, has not been convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that a specific situation existed—and too late discovered that what had appeared to be a reality was just a mirage? In short, is there any bridge player who has not been sold a bill of goods by his opponents?

When these things happened to us, did we not turn to our partners for sympathy, and inquire, meekly: "How could I have known?" And, in most cases, did not our appeal for compassion fall on deaf ears—for defeat is seldom accepted with grace. Did we then not suffer in wretched silence, hoping the morrow would bring relief?

All of the above is designed to enlist the reader's vicarious sympathy for the experts whose woeful experiences comprise the contents of this chapter. When comparable experiences befell you, your partner probably just turned away when you pleaded for sympathy. When similar experiences happened to our experts, under the pressure of top-flight competition, *their* partners counterattacked with: "How could you be so gullible? Anyone could see through their deceit. And you call yourself an analyst, etc., etc., etc."

In all likelihood, the unfortunate victims of these deals have never been the recipients of any kind words of comfort and solace. Let us lend a compassionate ear to their misfortunes, and reveal to them

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our understanding hearts. Let us do unto others as we would have others do unto us; and, lest we forget that in the future, as in the past, we will be victims of identical experiences, let us be motivated by the thought: "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

### HAND 1

This deal arose in the Regional Men's Pair Championships held in Pittsburgh in 1959. Our declarer went down at his grand slam contract; all of the other pairs in the room, no matter what contract they were in, and with no strain whatsoever, succeeded in taking all thirteen tricks.

		NORTH	
		♠	Q 9
		♥	A 9 5 4
		♦	K 10 8 7 6
		♣	10 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 8 7 4 2	♠	10 5 3
♥	J 3 2	♥	10 7 6
♦	9 3 2	♦	5 4
♣	9 2	♣	K 7 6 5 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K 6
		♥	K Q 8
		♦	A Q J
		♣	A Q J 8

Against South's *seven no-trump* contract, West opened—the jack of hearts! Who can blame declarer for assuming that the lead had been from a J-10 combination? He won the trick with the queen of hearts, followed up with the king, and then led the nine of hearts, finessing West for the ten of hearts. When East captured this trick, declarer became a sadder, but a wiser, man.

As is evident, if any other lead had been made, declarer would have cashed the king, queen, and ace of hearts, hoping for the adverse hearts to be divided 3-3. As it happened, they were so divided, and the board's fourth heart would have become declarer's thir-

teenth trick. Had the adverse hearts divided badly, declarer would have resorted to the club finesse. That, also, would have worked.

## HAND 2

It is an undisputed fact that at trick one, in a slam contract, no declarer is going to stake his life on making a right decision (or "guess") if an equally acceptable alternative line of play is available for future use. Capitalizing on this normal frame of mind, the West defender on this deal put declarer to the test immediately. The result was that declarer was *compelled* to go down a trick!

		NORTH	
		♠	3
		♥	A J 10 9
		♦	A Q J 10 2
		♣	8 6 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 10 9 7	♠	8 6 5 4 2
♥	6 2	♥	8 7 5 4 3
♦	K 9 8	♦	7 4 3
♣	J 7 5 3	♣	—
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K Q
		♥	K Q
		♦	6 5
		♣	A K Q 10 9 2

East-West vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	7 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened the eight of diamonds! At the table, would you have taken the finesse? Of course not, with six "sure" club tricks staring you in the face, plus three spades, four hearts, and the diamond ace for frosting. So you go up with the ace of diamonds, lead a club at

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trick two—and then concede a diamond to West's king, for a one-trick set.

Suppose that West makes his normal lead of the jack of spades, and at trick two you discover the miserable break in clubs. Now you would have no option but to take the diamond finesse, and you'd wind up making three spades, four hearts, three diamonds, and three clubs, for a very compact thirteen tricks.

From West's point of view, his opening diamond lead was magnificent. He reasoned that if declarer were willing to undertake a grand slam contract without bothering to check up on North's kings, he must be doing so on the basis of a solid club suit. But South didn't know—as West did know—that the clubs weren't going to break. Hence, to make sure that declarer subsequently wouldn't be able to fall back on a diamond finesse as a last resort, West opened a diamond—and extinguished declarer's last candle.

### HAND 3

I would like to venture the opinion that no matter who had been sitting South on this deal, he would have become a victim of West's splendid, though simple, play.

			NORTH		
			♠ 9 4 3		
			♥ A <del>K</del> 7 3		
			♦ 8 7 5 4		
			♣ 6 2		
	WEST			EAST	
	♠ J 10 8 2			♠ K 7 6 5	
	♥ 8 5			♥ Q J 10 9 2	
	♦ <del>Q</del> J 10 9			♦ 6 3 2	
	♣ K 8 7			♣ 4	
			SOUTH		
			♠ A Q		
			♥ 6 4		
			♦ A <del>K</del>		
			♣ A <del>Q</del> J 10 9 5 3		

Against South's *six club* contract, West led the queen of diamonds, which was won by South's ace. The dummy was then entered via

the heart king and a trump was led, South finessing the queen. He won the trick when West nonchalantly followed with the seven-spot. Convinced that East held the trump king, and knowing that East couldn't possibly have more than the K-8 remaining, dummy was then re-entered (for the last time), and the club finesse tried again. When East failed to follow suit, declarer was lost, for he had to concede a trump trick and a spade trick.

Had West taken the trump king when declarer finessed originally, declarer would then have used his second heart entry to dummy to finesse the spade king, successfully. But how could he have done so, in view of the fact that the club finesse had been favorable—and hence figured to succeed again.

#### HAND 4

To justify one's position when he can *prove* that he was right is, in theory, a simple thing to do. In practice, however, when a theoretically winning line of play has turned out to be the losing line, no amount of persuasive talk can be convincing to those who measure an effort only by its result. For example, look at what happened to Teddy Lightner, one of the world's all-time greats, on the following deal, which arose in the Master's Team-of-Four Championships of 1952.

		NORTH		
		♠ 10 9 6 5 2		
		♥ <del>A</del> J 8 4		
		♦ 9 <del>8</del> 3 2		
		♣ —		
WEST				EAST
♠ Q 4				♠ <del>A</del>
♥ <del>K</del> 10 9 7 6 3				♥ <del>8</del> 7
♦ <del>7</del> 6 5				♦ K Q J 4
♣ 9 5				♣ J 10 8 7 4 3
		SOUTH		
		♠ K J 8 7 3		
		♥ Q		
		♦ <del>A</del> 10		
		♣ A K Q 6 2		

Lightner, sitting South, was in a *six spade* contract, against which West led the only suit which could give declarer a problem: He led the diamond seven, East put up the jack, and South took the trick with his ace.

Before attacking the trump suit, South had to dispose of his diamond loser. One of the possibilities was to take the heart finesse. If it won, a club could then be ruffed, after which the ten of diamonds would be discarded on the ace of hearts. This was a 50-50 proposition.

The other possibility was to cash the ace, king, and queen of clubs, discarding dummy's remaining three diamonds. Then dummy could be entered via the heart ace, and a trump led. This offered a much better chance than the 50-50 heart finesse, since it required nothing more than a not-too-unreasonable division of the adverse clubs: either a 4-4 spit or a 5-3 split.

So Lightner played the ace of clubs, the king of clubs, and the queen of clubs. As can be observed, West trumped the latter lead with the trump queen, and the slam contract was defeated.

As was mentioned, this deal arose in a team-of-four match. When the board was replayed, the other South player arrived at the identical *six spade* contract, and received the same opening of the seven of diamonds. But this particular declarer chose to take the against-percentage heart finesse; and when it succeeded, he was able to get rid of his losing diamond on dummy's high heart. A trump lead then brought forth East's ace, and later declarer's king felled West's queen.

## HAND 5

This deal arose in the 1957 National Team-of-Four Championships, and features the lamentable tale of a declarer who was talked into taking a losing finesse.



NORTH			
♠	10 9		
♥	A J 7		
♦	A K Q 10 2		/
♣	J 6 3		
WEST		EAST	
♠	6 3	♠	Q J 8 7 5
♥	2	♥	K 8 6 4 3
♦	9 8 5 3	♦	J 6
♣	10 9 8 5 4 2	♣	7
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K 4 2
		♥	Q 10 9 5
		♦	7 4
		♣	A K Q

West led the ten of clubs against South's *six no-trump* contract, the trick being captured by declarer's queen. The heart finesse was then taken, losing to East's king, after which East returned the queen of spades which declarer won with his ace. Declarer now led a heart to the board's ace, West showing out. The ace of diamonds was cashed next, followed by the cashing of the ace and king of clubs. *On these last two tricks, East discarded the five and seven of spades.* South then took his king of spades, upon which East followed with the eight-spot. Declarer now paused to take stock.

East was known to have started with five hearts (West having failed to follow suit to the second round). East also figured to have five spades: When he won the heart king at trick two, his shift to the spade queen indicated possession of the jack. When compelled to make two discards on the clubs, he had tossed the five and seven of spades. And when declarer cashed his second high spade, East had followed with the eight-spot. So East still retained the spade jack (the fifth spade). Since East had also followed to one round of clubs and one round of diamonds, thus accounting for twelve of his cards, his other card had to be a diamond, since it couldn't be anything else (West had followed to two rounds of spades). On percentage, West figured to have the jack of diamonds, for East was known to have had but two diamonds originally, while West was

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known, therefore, to have started with four diamonds. So declarer led his remaining diamond and finessed dummy's ten-spot. When East won the trick with his jack, he cashed the jack of spades, thus handing declarer a two-trick set.

This is not the time to praise East for his magnificent seduction of declarer, since in this chapter our principal concern is with the plight of each of the various declarers who were misled. But our East defender—one of our finest players—undoubtedly discarded the five and seven of spades to deliberately let declarer know that East possessed five spades (and five hearts, which declarer would find out by himself). After all, East could have tossed away two worthless hearts instead, thus preventing declarer from obtaining a "count" of the opponents' distribution. But East was most happy, willing, and able to give declarer a little push—in the wrong direction. And the beauty of it, from East's point of view, was that all the sadistic glee which East derived from his seduction of declarer was at no cost whatsoever.

### HAND 6

The type of false-card embodied in the next deal is familiar to all of us, for too often have we been duped by it. The late M. A. Lightman was confronted by this false-carding situation in a regional tournament held in 1949—and he succumbed.

		NORTH			
		♠	<del>Q</del> <del>J</del> 5 4		
		♥	<del>A</del> <del>J</del> 10 6 3		
		♦	A 3		
		♣	<del>6</del> 5		
WEST				EAST	
♠	J 10 6 3 2	♠	8	♥	Q 8 7
♥	<del>4</del> 2	♥	<del>Q</del> 8 7	♦	<del>J</del> <del>9</del> <del>8</del> <del>6</del> 5 4 3
♦	K Q 10	♦	<del>J</del> <del>9</del> <del>8</del> <del>6</del> 5 4 3	♣	<del>7</del> 2
♣	J 10 4	♣	<del>7</del> 2		
		SOUTH			
		♠	<del>A</del> K 8		
		♥	K 9 3		
		♦	<del>A</del>		
		♣	<del>A</del> K Q 9 8 3		

Mr. Lightman found himself in a *six no-trump* contract. West led the king of diamonds, which was taken by dummy's ace. A club to the queen was then played, and West dropped the jack. He dropped it without undue haste and without undue deliberation, just as he would have dropped a jack if it had been either a singleton, or part of a doubleton, or part of a tripleton.

Declarer didn't make his final decision immediately. He first cashed the ace and king of hearts, hoping to catch the queen. Had he caught it, he would have had at least twelve sure tricks. He then took the ace, king, and queen of spades, anticipating that perhaps he could get some sort of count on the West hand. But all he learned was that West had started with five spades and two hearts, which was of no particular help to him. *If* West had started with five diamonds—not an unlikely possibility in view of the fact that the opponents had ten diamonds between them—then the jack of clubs had to be a singleton. So, at the crossroads, he led dummy's remaining club, and elected to finesse his nine-spot—and went down five tricks!

We can argue pro and con all day about how declarer should have played the club suit (though it's silly, for we all know how to play it now), but on one thing I'm sure there will be unanimity—had West dropped the four of clubs on the initial club lead (as any decent, honest player would have done), Lightman would have cashed twelve tricks without even working up a sweat.

## HAND 7

It has been estimated that about 60 per cent of all game contracts are made or lost on the opening lead. There are no available statistics on what percentage of slams are made because of a favorable (to declarer) opening lead, or what percentage of slams are defeated owing to an inspired opening lead.

The deal which follows is introduced to demonstrate how meaningless and misleading statistics can sometimes be. The hand arose in a top-level team-of-four practice match.

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NORTH			
♠	8		
♥	Q 8 6 4		
♦	A K 9 8		
♣	A 7 6 4		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K 10 9 5	♠	7 6 4 3 2
♥	J 10 9	♥	A 2
♦	7 6 5 2	♦	Q J 10 4
♣	8 3	♣	Q 5
SOUTH			
♠	A Q J		
♥	K 7 5 3		
♦	3		
♣	K J 10 9 2		

At both tables, South arrived at a *six heart* contract.

At Table 1, West chose to open the deuce of diamonds, which declarer won with dummy's king. It was obvious that the fulfillment of the contract required (among other things) losing no more than one trump trick; and that the only way this could be accomplished would be if one of the opponents held a doubleton ace of trumps. Of course, this was not enough in itself. Declarer also had to guess *which* of the opponents held the doubleton ace of trumps.

Having captured the opening diamond lead in dummy, declarer elected to play a low trump off the board. When East followed with the deuce, South put up his king, which won. He then returned a trump, West played the ten-spot—and the six was played from dummy. East was compelled to take the trick with the ace, after which dummy's queen of trumps picked up West's jack. When the ace and king of clubs caught East's queen, South rejoiced.

At Table 2, West led the five of spades against South's *six heart* contract. Declarer took this trick with his jack. He, too, recognized that the success of the contract depended on guessing which of the opponents held a doubleton ace of trumps. It was, of course, a pure guess; and, since he was in the South hand, he elected to play West for the doubleton ace. So, at trick two, he led a low trump, put up dummy's queen—and lost two trump tricks.

The moral? There isn't any. How could there be when an opening lead which gave declarer a present of a trick resulted in his going down; and an opening lead which gave declarer nothing enabled him to fulfill his contract.

## HAND 8

The next deal has become accepted in expert circles as a classic example of deceptive defense. It arose in the Masters Pair Championship of 1955. The East defender was Jack Ehrlenbach, of California.

		NORTH			
		♠	Q 7 5		
		♥	8		
		♦	A Q 10 9 7		
		♣	A K 10 6		
WEST				EAST	
♠	J	♠	10 6	♥	K 5 2
♥	A J 10 9 7 6 4	♥		♦	8 4 3 2
♦	6	♦		♣	8 7 5 2
♣	Q J 9 4	♣			
		SOUTH			
		♠	A K 9 8 4 3 2		
		♥	Q 3		
		♦	K J 5		
		♣	3		

Neither side vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

On West's opening lead of the ace of hearts, East dropped the king! West continued with a heart, and declarer, in no frame of mind to go down at trick two, ruffed with the queen of spades, East following with the deuce of hearts. Dummy's seven of trumps was

then led, East played the six, and declarer finessed the seven-spot, losing to West's jack.

At a casual glance, declarer's play may appear to be beyond the realm of comprehension. But let us look a bit more deeply into it.

I don't think anyone can criticize declarer's play of the queen of trumps at trick two. West's king of hearts might well have been a singleton; and East's opening bid of four hearts, against nonvulnerable opponents, might well have been based on nine hearts headed by the A-J-10. What caused declarer to go down was that East followed with the deuce of hearts to the second heart lead—and that set declarer to thinking about why East had false-carded with the king.

Declarer probably reasoned: "Why did East drop the king of hearts at trick one? Probably because he has the J-10-6 of trumps and wants to force me to ruff the second heart lead with the queen, so that his jack will become established as a winner." Thus, having convinced himself that East possessed the J-10-6 of spades, the finesse now became a fixation.

I think that even the most unforgiving of the readers—to whom success is all-important—sympathize with declarer, and are delighted that they were not in his shoes when the critical decision had to be made.

## HAND 9

If trickery can ever be described as beautiful, East's defense on the following deal fits that description.

		NORTH	
		♠	K Q 10 5
		♥	J 6 4
		♦	K 7
		♣	Q J 8 6
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 4	♠	8 7 6 3
♥	8 7 5 2	♥	Q 10 9
♦	Q J 10 8 4 3	♦	6 5
♣	5	♣	9 7 4 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	A 9 2
		♥	A K 3
		♦	A 9 2
		♣	A K 10 3

South landed in a *seven club* contract, with West leading the diamond queen, which was captured by dummy's king. The ace and king of trumps were then cashed, after which declarer led the ace of diamonds and followed up with another diamond, which he ruffed with dummy's jack. On this trick, *East underruffed with the seven-spot!*

This play by East set declarer's little gray cells into motion. Why didn't East discard a spade or a heart instead of needlessly wasting a trump? The only logical answer, according to declarer, had to be that East held both the spade jack and the heart queen, and that he didn't want to unguard either of them.

So, declarer first cashed the ace and king of hearts (there are days when one catches a doubleton queen). Then the North hand was re-entered via the trump queen, and a low spade was led, declarer finessing his nine-spot. West pounced on this with his jack. That he then returned a heart to defeat declarer two tricks was anticlimactic.

## HAND 10

On this deal, declarer was neither tricked, seduced, nor deceived by the opponents. But he is nevertheless entitled to at least a sincere "tough luck, fellow" from all of the readers, for after declarer had played the hand perfectly, the West defender led the only card that

could defeat the contract. I doubt that one out of five of our better players (and not one out of a hundred of our fair players) would have led that card.

		NORTH	
		♠	A 10 5 4 2
		♥	K 10 8
		♦	K Q
		♣	9 7 6
WEST		EAST	
♠	8 3	♠	9
♥	J 9 6 3	♥	Q 7 5
♦	J 8 7 3	♦	10 9 5 4 2
♣	Q J 10	♣	8 5 4 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q J 7 6
		♥	A 4 2
		♦	A 6
		♣	A K 2

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

After West's queen of clubs opening had been taken by South's king, declarer picked up the adverse trumps in two rounds. He next cashed the ace of clubs, and followed by leading the ace and king of diamonds. Then came the deuce of clubs and West was thrust into the lead.

Had West now led a diamond (or a club, if he had had one), declarer would have ruffed it in dummy while simultaneously discarding his losing heart.

Had West led a low heart, declarer would have put up dummy's eight and would have captured East's queen with his ace, after which he would have finessed West for the jack of hearts.



But West led the *jack* of hearts—and declarer had just become a doomed man. Even if the opponents had now shown him their cards, he could not have avoided the loss of a heart trick.

## HAND 11

This is the final deal in this chapter on “have-compassion-for-your-fellow-sufferers.” To the best of my knowledge, the hand never did arise in actual combat.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it belongs here. In my opinion, Orson Welles’ radio program of 1938, in which he so vividly described a hypothetical invasion from Mars that people thought it was actually happening, was kid stuff compared to the melancholia and/or terror that would be instilled in the minds of all of our South declarers when they saw West’s opening lead against their *six spade* contract. Let me put you, the reader, into the South seat:

### NORTH

♠ J 10 7  
♥ J 10 9 5 2  
♦ 10 8 7 4 3  
♣ —

### SOUTH

♠ A K 6 5 4 3 2  
♥ A  
♦ A K  
♣ K 9 3

While waiting for West to decide what he was going to lead against your slam contract, you had asked your partner if you could look at his hand (since when are anticipation and impatience criminal offenses?). As you view the combined twenty-six cards, the future looks bright. A heart, a diamond, or a club lead will enable you to trump three clubs in dummy, and, at worst, you will lose a trump trick (if either opponent started with the Q-9-8). A low trump lead will bring forth dummy’s jack, and will eliminate the trump loser regardless of the location of the queen of trumps; and, although in

<sup>1</sup> It is derived from a humorous story in the *Bridge World*, Nov., 1946, p. 16.

this case you will be able to ruff only two clubs, one club trick will be your sole loser.

At last West leads—the *queen of spades*!

Gentle reader, don't bother trying to figure out how to fulfill your six spade contract. Take a look at all four hands, and spare yourself the aggravation of trying to make an unmakeable contract:

NORTH			
♠	J 10 7		
♥	J 10 9 5 2		
♦	10 8 7 4 3		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 9 8	♠	—
♥	4 3	♥	K Q 8 7 6
♦	9 6	♦	Q J 5 2
♣	J 8 7 5 4 2	♣	A Q 10 6
SOUTH			
♠	A K 6 5 4 3 2		
♥	A		
♦	A K		
♣	K 9 3		

You win the queen of spades with the king. Only two clubs can now be ruffed in dummy, with the jack and ten of trumps. This will leave you with one club loser; and, of course, West's nine of spades will always win a trick. The only remaining hope is that the six outstanding diamonds are divided 3-3. But you know d— well that whoever was that mean that he got West to lead the queen of spades would also have seen to it that the adverse diamonds were divided badly. But you give it the old college try—and go down fighting.

So you gracefully accept defeat. You look at your watch, and tell your host that it's getting rather late. You pick up your hat, your coat, and say goodnight. As you walk homeward, the feeling mounts within you that of the thousands of bridge hands which you have played in your lifetime, the only one that you'll remember forever is the last hand that you will ever play.

## 6

### ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS: QUALIFICATION TEST FOR NOMINATION TO SLAMDOM'S HALL OF FAME

You, the reader, have probably played very little in top-flight competition, in games where each of the three other players was an acknowledged (*not* self-acknowledged) expert. Hence, you have never been given the opportunity of determining whether your capabilities are equivalent to those of our accepted experts. Here is a chance to test yourself with respect to your Hall of Fame qualifications—to submit your credentials, as it were.

This examination consists of twelve problems, each of which involves answering what *you*, as the South declarer at the given slam contract, *play at trick one or trick two*. On each of these deals, you will assume that your opponents are not only the world's greatest players, but that they are players whose forte is defensive play.

The correct answers, with the explanations, are given directly after Problem 12. The actual bidding is presented in those cases where its interpretation *might* be (not "will be") significant; and where the correct interpretation of it *might* reveal a clue which will serve as a guide to the proper course of action.

The candidates electing to take this examination will bear in mind that there is no proctor in the room; and that peeking at the answers before one extends himself fully in attempting to come up with the right answer is—a personal matter.

**PROBLEM 1**

NORTH  
 ♠ 7 5 2  
 ♥ Q 6 5  
 ♦ 9 8 6 2  
 ♣ Q 7 4

SOUTH  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ A K 9 7 4 2  
 ♦ A K Q J 10 5  
 ♣ 6

E	S	W	N
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	6 ♦	Dble.	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opens the jack of clubs.  
 What do you play—and why?

**PROBLEM 2**

NORTH  
 ♠ 10  
 ♥ K 7 5 4  
 ♦ A Q 6  
 ♣ K J 10 5 4

SOUTH  
 ♠ A K 8 6 4  
 ♥ J 10 9 6 3  
 ♦ K  
 ♣ A Q

S	W	N	E
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the ace of trumps  
 and East follows suit with the  
 eight. Do you play the king when  
 West leads the deuce of trumps  
 to trick two?

### PROBLEM 3

NORTH  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ 7 6 4  
 ♦ A Q 9 6 5 2  
 ♣ A J 10 6

SOUTH  
 ♠ K 10 7 4  
 ♥ A K Q 8 2  
 ♦ K J 3  
 ♣ 5

Against your *six heart* contract, West leads the queen of spades, which you trump in dummy. To trick two, you lead the six of trumps, East follows with the nine-spot. What do you play from the South hand?

### PROBLEM 4

NORTH  
 ♠ K Q J 6  
 ♥ A Q 7 5  
 ♦ A Q 4  
 ♣ 9 2

SOUTH  
 ♠ 4  
 ♥ K 9 8 3 2  
 ♦ K J 10 7  
 ♣ A K 6

You have reached a *six heart* contract. West opens the queen of clubs, which you take with your ace. What do you lead to trick two?

## PROBLEM 5

NORTH  
 ♠ J 9 8  
 ♥ A Q  
 ♦ A K J 8 2  
 ♣ J 7 6

SOUTH  
 ♠ A 5 2  
 ♥ J 10 4  
 ♦ Q 10 9  
 ♣ A K Q 2

S	W	N	E
1 NT	Pass	6 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West leads the three of spades, you put up the eight from dummy, East plays the queen, and you take it with your ace. Do you play back a spade, knowing that *West* has the ten-spot?

## PROBLEM 6

NORTH  
 ♠ A 4  
 ♥ J 10 6 5  
 ♦ 6 5 3  
 ♣ A 7 4 3

SOUTH  
 ♠ K 10 8 7 3 2  
 ♥ A K Q  
 ♦ A K 7 2  
 ♣ —

S	W	N	E
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the king of clubs. What do you play from the North and South hands to this trick?

## PROBLEM 7

NORTH  
 ♠ A 5 4  
 ♥ 10 9  
 ♦ 10 9  
 ♣ K Q J 10 9 8

SOUTH  
 ♠ 6  
 ♥ A K Q 8 7  
 ♦ A K Q 8 7 2  
 ♣ A

Against your *six no-trump* contract, West opens the spade king. Do you win it with dummy's ace?

## PROBLEM 8

NORTH  
 ♠ K J 2  
 ♥ A J 4 2  
 ♦ K J 4 3  
 ♣ 10 9

SOUTH  
 ♠ 8 4  
 ♥ K Q 8 7 3  
 ♦ A Q 9 6  
 ♣ A K

Against your *six heart* contract, West leads the queen of clubs, East plays the deuce, and you win the trick with the ace. What do you play at trick two?

## PROBLEM 9

NORTH  
 ♠ Q 10 8  
 ♥ 6 2  
 ♦ A 10 7 3  
 ♣ Q J 9 6

SOUTH  
 ♠ A 7 6 4 3 2  
 ♥ A K Q 5 4 3  
 ♦ 5  
 ♣ —

S	W	N	E
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Dble.	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West opens the club ace, which you ruff. What do you lead at trick two?

## PROBLEM 10

NORTH  
 ♠ A J 9 2  
 ♥ Q 7  
 ♦ A J 10  
 ♣ A Q J 8

SOUTH  
 ♠ K Q 10 8 7 6 4  
 ♥ K 3  
 ♦ Q 5  
 ♣ 10 9

You are playing a *six spade* contract. West cashes the ace of hearts at trick one. At trick two he leads the six of diamonds. Do you finesse?



PROBLEM 11

NORTH  
 ♠ Q 10 6 2  
 ♥ K 5 4 2  
 ♦ 9 8 5  
 ♣ A J

SOUTH  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ A J 10 8 7  
 ♦ A K Q J 4  
 ♣ K Q 6

You have reached a *six heart* contract. West opens the ace of spades, which you ruff. What do you play at trick two?

PROBLEM 12

NORTH  
 ♠ 9 4 2  
 ♥ K 6  
 ♦ 10 7 4 3 2  
 ♣ A 7 4

SOUTH  
 ♠ A K Q J 10 7 3  
 ♥ A 9 8  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ Q 5 2

West has opened the bidding with *one diamond*, and with West and East passing thereafter, you arrive at a *six spade* contract. West leads the king of diamonds. What do you play at trick one?

## PROBLEM 1

NORTH			
♠ 7 5 2			
♥ Q 6 5			
♦ 9 8 6 2			
♣ Q 7 4			
WEST		EAST	
♠ K Q J 8 6		♠ A 10 9 4 3	
♥ J 10 8 3		♥ —	
♦ 4 3		♦ 7	
♣ J 5		♣ A K 10 9 8 3 2	
SOUTH			
♠ —			
♥ A K 9 7 4 2			
♦ A K Q J 10 5			
♣ 6			
EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	6 ♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass		

QUESTION: West opens the jack of clubs. What do you play?

ANSWER: The queen of clubs.

To most bridge players, there would appear to be no problem, and no danger to the hand no matter what card is played. Yet, on the bidding, the possible danger becomes apparent.

East had opened the bidding with one club, had jumped in diamonds, and had subsequently raised his partner's spade suit. Surely, he might well be void of hearts—and if West's jack of clubs is permitted to hold the trick, the dangerous heart shift might be made.

Very simply, the issue resolves itself into: assuming that one of the opponents is void in hearts, which opponent is more apt to be void? The reader will agree that East is the logical candidate.

An amusing tale is connected with this deal, which has become a

classic. When it arose, the actual declarer incorrectly played a low club from dummy at trick one. While West was pondering over what to lead next, declarer exposed his cards and stated: "They're all mine." West, trusting his eyesight, now played back a heart.

## PROBLEM 2

		NORTH	
		♠	10
		♥	K 7 5 4
		♦	A Q 6
		♣	K J 10 5 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q J 9 5	♠	7 3 2
♥	A Q 2	♥	8
♦	J 10 9 7	♦	8 5 4 3 2
♣	8 2	♣	9 7 6 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K 8 6 4
		♥	J 10 9 6 3
		♦	K
		♣	A Q

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

QUESTION: West leads the ace of trumps, and East follows suit with the eight. Do you play dummy's king when West leads the deuce of trumps to trick two?

ANSWER: Today you would not play the king, as anyone can plainly see. But what you would play tomorrow, if an analogous situation arose, is another matter.

At the table, when West opens the ace of trumps, the experienced declarer would deduce that the reason for the trump lead is that West probably has spades behind declarer; and that his trump lead

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is aimed at cutting down dummy's ruffing power. However, he would also appreciate that this had nothing to do with the location of the queen of trumps. Frankly, declarer could never know—until it was all over—whether West had opened the ace from the A-2 combination or from the A-Q-2 combination. Probably he would assume the former, and put up dummy's king with the expectation of catching the queen.

There is no answer to the question of what to play from dummy at trick two. If the reader's thoughts traversed the above reasoning, he is considered to have answered correctly.

### PROBLEM 3

			NORTH		
			♠ —		
			♥ 7 6 4		
			♦ A Q 9 6 5 2		
			♣ A J 10 6		
	WEST			EAST	
♠	Q J 9 6			♠	A 8 5 3 2
♥	J 10 5 3			♥	9
♦	10 4			♦	8 7
♣	K 9 2			♣	Q 8 7 4 3
			SOUTH		
			♠ K 10 7 4		
			♥ A K Q 8 2		
			♦ K J 3		
			♣ 5		

QUESTION: Against your *six heart* contract, West leads the queen of spades, which you trump in dummy. To trick two, you lead the six of trumps, and West follows with the nine-spot. What do you play from the South hand?

ANSWER: The deuce of trumps.

If, instead, you take the queen, intending to draw the adverse trumps, you will go down if the adverse trumps break 4-1. If this line is adopted, there will now be no way of disposing of your three

losing spades, since if you start running the diamonds, the possessor of the four trumps will ruff in, and the opponents will cash at least one spade trick. (This is all in theory.)

If you properly permit East's nine of trumps to win trick two, the defense is powerless. Whatever East returns, you will win. Your ace, king, and queen of trumps will now pick up the adverse pieces, and your losing spades will be discarded on the board's diamonds.

The only risk in allowing East to win the original trump lead is that he might then lead a diamond, which West might (hypothetically) ruff. The prime question is: What is more likely to exist, a 4-0 division of diamonds, or a 4-1 division of hearts? Mathematically, the latter is the favorite—and, in experience, one learns to play favorites at the bridge table.

#### PROBLEM 4

		NORTH	
		♠	K Q J 6
		♥	A Q 7 5
		♦	A Q 4
		♣	9 2
WEST	EAST	SOUTH	
♠ 8 7 3 2	♠ A 10 9 5	♠	4
♥ J 10 6 4	♥ —	♥	K 9 8 3 2
♦ —	♦ 9 8 6 5 3 2	♦	K J 10 7
♣ Q J 10 4,3	♣ 8 7 5	♣	A K 6

QUESTION: You have reached a *six heart* contract. West opens the queen of clubs, which you take with your ace. What do you lead to trick two?

ANSWER: The king of hearts.

This is a standard safety play, designed to take care of West's possession of the four outstanding trumps. When East shows out, it now

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becomes routine to pick up West's remaining J-10-6 of trumps. If East should be the one who holds the four outstanding trumps, declarer can do nothing about avoiding the loss of a trump trick. Hence, the initial lead of the king, to control that which is controllable.

Those candidates who, at trick two, decided to try to sneak through the singleton spade (hoping to avoid the loss of a spade trick) would have become quite unhappy. East, upon winning with the spade ace, would have returned a diamond (a club return is futile, since declarer is known to possess the king), and West would have ruffed, for the setting trick.

There are enough situations in bridge when control does not belong to you, and your only hope is to put something over on the opposition. This deal is not one of those situations, for complete control is yours—and you should not relinquish it.

## PROBLEM 5

				NORTH					
				♠	J 9 8				
				♥	A Q				
				♦	A K J 8 2				
				♣	J 7 6				
WEST						EAST			
♠	7 6 4 3			♠	K Q 10				
♥	K 9 7 5 2			♥	8 6 3				
♦	7 4			♦	6 5 3				
♣	5 3			♣	10 9 8 4				
				SOUTH					
				♠	A 5 2				
				♥	J 10 4				
				♦	Q 10 9				
				♣	A K Q 2				
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH		EAST			
1 NT		Pass		6 NT		Pass			
Pass		Pass							

QUESTION: West leads the three of spades, you put up the eight

from dummy, East plays the queen, and you take it with your ace. Do you play back a spade, knowing *West* has the ten-spot?

ANSWER: You should.

However, if you lead back a spade, it will cost you your slam today. Nevertheless, it figures to be the right play, for surely any “sane” East defender, holding a Q-10 combination, would not have played the queen on dummy’s eight, when the ten-spot would have accomplished the same result. Frankly, if any declarer took the heart finesse instead—for the twelfth trick—he should know that, as of this moment—he is being viewed with deep suspicion.

As to East’s deceptive play of the queen, it could have turned out badly in other circumstances, since it might have misled partner. But East chose to take that calculated risk, hoping that his play would mislead and hurt declarer more than it would mislead and hurt partner. This is what you run into when you play with experts—and, in time, you become quite cynical and distrusting.

As is apparent, had East put up the ten of spades instead of the queen, declarer would have had no option but to take the heart finesse, successfully.

## PROBLEM 6

		NORTH	
		♠	A 4
		♥	J 10 6 5
		♦	6 5 3
		♣	A 7 4 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 9 5	♠	J 6
♥	8 4 3 2	♥	9 7
♦	Q 9	♦	J 10 8 4
♣	K Q 10 6	♣	J 9 8 5 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	K 10 8 7 3 2
		♥	A K Q
		♦	A K 7 2
		♣	—

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SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

QUESTION: West leads the king of clubs. What do you play from both the North and South hands?

ANSWER: Win with the ace and discard the queen of hearts from your own hand.

Then you play the king of trumps, the ace and king of hearts, and re-enter dummy via the ace of trumps. Next will come the jack and ten of hearts, on which you will discard your two losing diamonds. The defenders' only winner will be the high queen of trumps.

The above line of play will succeed whenever the defender with the high trump has at least three hearts. The alternative play—to discard a diamond on the club ace at trick one—is a very inferior play, for declarer, in order to fulfill his contract, must now be able to cash the ace, king, and queen of hearts before returning to dummy. And, of course, the third heart figures to be trumped, since when six cards of a suit are outstanding, they don't figure to be divided 3-3.

In playing the hand as recommended, declarer either eliminates or minimizes the chances of a defender ruffing the third round of hearts.

### PROBLEM 7

NORTH  
 ♠ A 5 4  
 ♥ 10 9  
 ♦ 10 9  
 ♣ K Q J 10 9 8

SOUTH  
 ♠ 6  
 ♥ A K Q 8 7  
 ♦ A K Q 8 7 2  
 ♣ A



QUESTION: Against your *six no-trump* contract, West opens the spade king. Do you win it with dummy's ace?

ANSWER: No.

By declining to win the trick with the ace, if West returns anything but a club, your contract is absolutely guaranteed: If he plays back a spade, you simply discard your ace of clubs on the ace of spades; if, instead, West returns a heart or a diamond, your nine or ten in the suit West returns will become an entry to dummy, enabling you to discard your club ace on the ace of spades.

If a clairvoyant West, upon being permitted to win the opening lead, happens to lead back a club, then (and only then) are you in precisely the same position you would have been in had you elected to win the opening lead: You now have to bring home five heart and six diamond tricks, or catch a singleton jack of hearts or jack of diamonds. In other words, by declining to win the opening lead, you have going for you ("on the house") the realistic hope that West will not be sufficiently gifted to shift to a club. And, if he happens to shift to a club, then you're exactly even with the rest of the field, who chose to win the opening lead.

The adverse cards are of no significance, hence their omission.

# PROBLEM 8

			NORTH		
			♠ K J 2		
			♥ A J 4 2		
			♦ K J 4 3		
			♣ 10 9		
	WEST			EAST	
	♠ A 10 9 7 6			♠ Q 5 3	
	♥ 9 5			♥ 10 6	
	♦ 8 2			♦ 10 7 5	
	♣ Q J 8 7			♣ 6 5 4 3 2	
			SOUTH		
			♠ 8 4		
			♥ K Q 8 7 3		
			♦ A Q 9 6		
			♣ A K		

QUESTION: Against your *six heart* contract, West leads the queen of clubs, East plays the deuce, and you win the trick with the ace. What do you play at trick two?

ANSWER: The eight of spades.

Let's be realistic. If you draw trumps, cash your diamonds and clubs, and then, at long last, lead a spade, there isn't a decent West defender alive who will climb up with his ace. (And we're not discussing our champion defenders on this deal, who would know that you have eleven sure winners—five hearts, four diamonds, and two clubs—and that if you win a spade trick your contract is made.)

Certainly, your best hope is to lead a spade immediately, with the wishful thinking embodied that West, if he has the ace, will climb up with it, figuring you for a singleton. If, in theory, West plays low, you're in no better and no worse position than if you lead the spade later. But, in playing the spade at trick two, you have going for you the possibility that West *may* rise with his ace. He won't later, that's for sure.

As to why you should lead the eight-spot, rather than the four, the reason is this: The eight somehow looks more like a singleton than the four, because of our natural tendency to lead the lowest when we expect to play high from the other hand.

### PROBLEM 9

		NORTH			
		♠	Q 10 8		
		♥	6 2		
		♦	A 10 7 3		
		♣	Q J 9 6		
WEST				EAST	
♠	K J 9 5			♠	—
♥	9 7			♥	J 10 8
♦	K J 8 4			♦	Q 9 6 2
♣	A 7 3			♣	K 10 8 5 4 2
		SOUTH			
		♠	A 7 6 4 3 2		
		♥	A K Q 5 4 3		
		♦	5		
		♣	—		
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH	
1	♠	Pass		2	♠
6	♠	Double		Pass	
Pass					

up dummy's ten should West follow with a low spade. Of course, when the ten wins, and East fails to follow suit, the entire picture is revealed, enabling declarer to limit his trump losses to one trick.

If the ace of spades is led at trick two, for a "look-see," declarer will lose two trump tricks.

## PROBLEM 10

		NORTH		
		♠ A J 9 2		
		♥ Q 7		
		♦ A J 10		
		♣ A Q J 8		
WEST				EAST
♠ 3				♠ 5
♥ A J 10 9 2				♥ 8 6 5 4
♦ K 6 4 2				♦ 9 8 7 3
♣ 7 5 3				♣ K 6 4 2
		SOUTH		
		♠ K Q 10 8 7 6 4		
		♥ K 3		
		♦ Q 5		
		♣ 10 9		

QUESTION: You are playing a *six spade* contract. West cashes the ace of hearts at trick one. At trick two, he leads the six of diamonds. Do you finesse?

ANSWER: Yes, assuming the defenders are good players.

With a good defensive player sitting West, for him to lead a diamond into dummy's A-J-10 at trick two if he did *not* have the king of diamonds, would be a very bad play since it might well result in trapping partner's (hypothetical) queen, giving declarer a free finesse. If East held the diamond king (looking at the situation through West's eyes), if he were destined to make it, he didn't require any assistance from West. But if West held the diamond king, the diamond shift at trick two would be the correct lead, for if East held the diamond queen, the defense would establish a trick or two

for themselves; and, if declarer held the diamond queen, nothing would be lost by the diamond shift since, in this case, declarer could always take the diamond finesse himself.

Hence, West's shift to a diamond at trick two figured to be an attempt to talk declarer out of taking the diamond finesse, and to get him to place his reliance on the club finesse instead.

If, in your games, the defenders just *never* lead away from kings against slam contracts, then you would not take the diamond finesse at trick two; and, instead, stake everything on the club finesse.

# PROBLEM 11

NORTH		
♠	Q 10 6 2	
♥	K 5 4 2	
♦	9 8 5	
♣	A J	
WEST		
♠	A J 9 8 5 4	
♥	Q 9 6 3	
♦	—	
♣	8 4 2	
EAST		
♠	K 7 3	
♥	—	
♦	10 7 6 3 2	
♣	10 9 7 5 3	
SOUTH		
♠	—	
♥	A J 10 8 7	
♦	A K Q J 4	
♣	K Q 6	

QUESTION: You have reached a *six heart* contract. West opens the ace of spades, which you ruff. What do you play at trick two?

ANSWER: The ace of trumps.

When this deal arose in the National Team-of-Four Championships of 1951, Howard Schenken was the South declarer. About ten seconds after ruffing the opening lead, he said: "I'm going to take the safety play." He then laid down the ace of hearts, and when East showed out, he finessed his jack. The king of hearts was now

cashed, leaving the queen outstanding. The diamonds and clubs were then taken, and West could take his queen of trumps whenever he chose to.

If, when Schenken played the ace of hearts, West had shown out, then Schenken would have led the jack, passing it to East's queen. Had East then returned a spade, South would have ruffed it with the eight-spot, cashed the ten, entered dummy via the club ace, and played the king of trumps to pick up West's last trump.

When the board was replayed, the other South declarer led a trump to the king at trick two. He now had to go down, for West's nine of trumps (in addition to the queen) had just become a winner. (When West obtained the lead with the queen of trumps, another spade lead forced declarer to ruff with the ten of trumps.)

## PROBLEM 12

		NORTH		
		♠ 9 4 2		
		♥ K 6		
		♦ 10 7 4 3 2		
		♣ A 7 4		
WEST				EAST
♠ 6			♠ 8 5	
♥ Q J 10			♥ 7 5 4 3 2	
♦ A K Q 6 5			♦ J 9 8	
♣ K 10 6 3			♣ J 9 8	
		SOUTH		
		♠ A K Q J 10 7 3		
		♥ A 9 8		
		♦ —		
		♣ Q 5 2		

QUESTION: *West* has opened the bidding with *one diamond*, and with West and East passing thereafter, you arrive at a *six spade* contract. West leads the king of diamonds. What do you play at trick one?

ANSWER: A low club from the South hand, permitting West to win the trick.

This was a most unfair problem, since the subject of the squeeze will not be discussed until the next chapter, "The Mastery of Technique." However, it does belong here in a sense, since any would-be applicant to the Hall of Fame must be versed in diagnosing a squeeze setup.

The proper play of this deal is presented in the following chapter, on page 130. For the moment, let me state that if declarer ruffs the opening lead, he will be unable to squeeze West in diamonds and clubs, and eventually will wind up losing two club tricks. But if the opening diamond lead is not trumped, declarer will be able to put West in the position where the latter will be unable to guard both the diamonds and the king of clubs.

Well, now that the examination is finished, how did you fare? One thing I know for sure: You will agree that when one gets nominated to the Hall of Fame, he has earned the honor.

# 7

## THE MASTERY OF TECHNIQUE

There is no doubt that the primary reason why the experts are such consistent winners is that they possess great technical skill in both bidding and play. Of course, this knowledge of technique is not, in itself, sufficient to make one an expert. It must be supplemented by keen judgment and reinforced by the ability to deceive and outwit the opposition. But, basically, thorough familiarity with all of the principles of sound play, and with all of the "advanced" situations which require special treatment, is *the* prerequisite for becoming a top-notch bridge player.

The "advanced" plays consist of end-plays, squeeze plays, and coups. Each of these classifications contains many different types of plays. For example, in the "squeeze" category, we have the simple squeeze, the double squeeze, the triple squeeze, the compound squeeze, the trump squeeze, etc. These advanced plays comprise a vast group, and it would necessitate the writing of many volumes to cover the subject adequately.

It is not the purpose of this book to delve into, or analyze, these diverse plays. However, since the occasions for their employment are reasonably frequent in slam contracts, it would be a dereliction of duty on my part if I ignored them completely and by-passed them.

The deals which follow will introduce the major types of advanced plays in their more-or-less elemental forms. There will be presented the end-play, the squeeze play, the trump coup, and the dummy-reversal play. All of these deals were encountered in actual competition by our experts who, in bringing home their slam contracts, acquitted themselves nobly and earned themselves a measure of glory.



## THE END-PLAY

One of the most interesting (and useful) plays in contract bridge is the end-play, or, as it is also known, the throw-in play. Despite the high frequency of occurrence of this play, the fact remains that only the experts seem to have a working knowledge of its application. Somehow or other, the misconception has arisen that the end-play is most difficult to master and that its use is reserved for experts only. As a result of this attitude, it has been shrouded with an unwarranted air of complexity by most bridge authorities.

In essence, the end-play is but an extension of the elementary principle that it is more advantageous to have an opponent lead up to your high-card strength than it is to lead up to it yourself. (E.g., if you hold the A-Q of spades, you would love to have your left-hand opponent lead spades.) In other words, it is always one's desire to sit smugly in last position, in the catbird's seat, and wait for the opponents to lead up to you so that you can ambush them. How to have this desire fulfilled is, of course, another matter—and the gratification of the desire requires positive action and not just wishful thinking.

Let us see, through illustrations from real life, how the experts plot their courses, set their traps, and attain the sought-for objective: *forcing* an opponent to make a lead which either gives the experts a present of a trick, or eliminates the necessity of the expert's attempting to guess the location of a key card.

### HAND 1

This deal is introduced to demonstrate how the inability to recognize a conceivable end-play setup is a crime against bridge society. As the reader will note, South was not an expert, not a good bridge player, and not even the composite average bridge player. He was strictly a "card-pusher."

NORTH			
♠	10 7 3 2		
♥	K J 6 5 2		
♦	K 8		
♣	K 7		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K	♠	A J 9 8 6 5
♥	4	♥	9 8
♦	J 9 6 5 2	♦	10 7 4
♣	10 8 5 4 3 2	♣	9 6
SOUTH			
♠	Q 4		
♥	A Q 10 7 3		
♦	A Q 3		
♣	A Q J		

Our South declarer landed in a *six heart* contract. West opened a low club. South gazed at the dummy, and stated: "You get two spade tricks. Down one."

Although the contract was a bad one, and declarer's chances of making it were slim, today was the day when the slam was there for the taking. After winning the club opening, all declarer had to do was to draw trumps, eliminate diamonds and clubs from both hands, and lead a spade which West would be compelled to win. Any return that West now made, from the following position, would give declarer his contract:

NORTH			
♠	10		
♥	J 6 5		
♦	—		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	A J 9 8
♥	—	♥	—
♦	J 9	♦	—
♣	10 8	♣	—
SOUTH			
	♠	Q	
	♥	Q 10 7	
	♦	—	
	♣	—	

Either the club or diamond return would be ruffed in dummy, while declarer simultaneously discarded his losing spade. Of course, if West returned a spade, then it would be another matter. But then, we're not concerned with other matters over which we have no control.

## HAND 2

By way of contrast to the preceding hand, the next deal arose in an all-expert game; and ten seconds after the opening lead had been made, declarer spread his hand and said: "I'm going to strip the hand. You'll get a club trick. The rest are mine." It took an end-play to make the hand, but the declarer and the opponents saw it immediately. The opponents accepted declarer's claim without questioning him as to how he intended to play it and conceded him his slam.

		NORTH	
		♠	Q J 9 7 4
		♥	A Q 6
		♦	A 10 5
		♣	4 2
WEST		EAST	
♠	8	♠	10 3
♥	J 10 9 2	♥	7 5 3
♦	7 4 2	♦	Q 9 8 6
♣	K J 9 6 3	♣	10 8 7 5
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K 6 5 2
		♥	K 8 4
		♦	K J 3
		♣	A Q

West opened the jack of hearts against South's *six spade* contract. Had declarer played out the hand, he would have won the opening lead, drawn trumps, cashed his two other high hearts, and then would have played the ace of clubs, followed by the queen of clubs (spurning the finesse). It mattered not which of the opponents captured the trick with the king of clubs, for this would have been the position at the conclusion of trick seven:

		NORTH	
		♠	J 9 7
		♥	—
		♦	A 10 5
		♣	—
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	—
♥	10	♥	—
♦	7 4 2	♦	Q 9 8 6
♣	J 9	♣	10 8
		SOUTH	
		♠	A 6 5
		♥	—
		♦	K J 3
		♣	—

A club or a heart lead by whichever opponent had the club king would permit declarer to trump in dummy, while discarding the three of diamonds from his own hand. And, if a diamond were led instead, declarer would obtain a free finesse and pick up a third trick in the diamond suit.

### HAND 3

West's untimely double on this next deal convinced declarer that the only way his slam contract could be made was via an end-play. He was right—and his execution was flawless.

NORTH		
♠	K Q 8 7	
♥	7 6 4 2	
♦	K 3	
♣	A Q 5	
WEST		EAST
♠	J 9 5 2	♠ 10 4 3
♥	K Q 9	♥ 3
♦	8 6 2	♦ 10 9 7 5 4
♣	10 4 2-	♣ 9 8 7 6-
SOUTH		
♠	A 6	
♥	A J 10 8 5	
♦	A Q J	
♣	K-J-3	

When South reached a *six heart* contract, West decided to step in with a double! West opened the deuce of spades, and when declarer viewed the dummy, he correctly concluded that West's double had to be based on the protected king and queen of trumps. Where normally (without the double) declarer would have played either the ace and another heart, or, more likely, double-finessed in hearts, playing East to possess either the queen or king, West's double forewarned declarer that neither of these lines of play would succeed.

South won the opening lead with his spade ace and cashed his three top clubs. Now a spade was led to the king, and a low spade was ruffed. Then came a diamond to dummy's king, after which the

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queen of spades was ruffed. Next the ace of diamonds was cashed, followed by a ruff of declarer's queen of diamonds in dummy. (How do you like that "crazy" declarer, ruffing two sure winners!)

At this point, declarer, West, and dummy each had three cards left; three trumps apiece. A low trump was now led off the board, declarer put in his ten-spot and West won the trick with his queen. West had no choice but to lead away from his K-9 of trumps right into declarer's A-J.

The moral? For the defenders: Speech is silver, silence is golden. For the declarer: Listen and learn.

### HAND 4

This deal combines the knowledge of an end-play with *counting* and *percentage*; and, by correctly applying this knowledge, declarer was enabled to eliminate a guess.

		NORTH			
		♠	K Q 8 7 5 3 2		
		♥	K 8 4		
		♦	5		
		♣	Q 9		
WEST				EAST	
♠	—	♠	6	♥	Q
♥	J 10 9 6 3 2	♦	K 10 7 4 3 2	♦	K 10 7 4 3 2
♦	Q 9 8	♣	K J 7 4 2	♣	K J 7 4 2
♣	10 8 6 5				
		SOUTH			
		♠	A J 10 9 4		
		♥	A 7 5		
		♦	A J 6		
		♣	A 3		

South landed in a *six spade* contract, against which West led the jack of hearts. This was taken by dummy's king, East dropping the queen. The ace of trumps picked up the adverse piece, after which the ace of diamonds was cashed. A low diamond was then ruffed in dummy. Declarer now returned to his own hand via the heart ace (East discarding a diamond). He then ruffed his remaining dia-

mond—and paused for reflection. This was the setup prior to leading to trick seven.

NORTH	
♠	Q 8 7 5
♥	8
♦	—
♣	Q 9
SOUTH	
♠	J 10 9 4
♥	7
♦	—
♣	A 3

West was known to have started with six hearts and at least three diamonds. Hence, he could have, *at most*, four clubs; and, thus, East had, *as a minimum*, five clubs. Since whoever has the most cards of a suit figures to have any one specific card in that suit, declarer chose to play East for the club king. He now led the ace and another club—and East was end-played when he took the queen with the king. Since he had no more hearts, he was compelled to return either a club or a diamond. Whichever he led would enable declarer to discard his losing heart while ruffing the trick in dummy.

If, somehow, West had been revealed as the possessor of the greater number of clubs—thus leading to the probability that he had the club king—declarer would have end-played West. This would have been accomplished—at trick seven, in the above diagram—by leading a heart, compelling West to win. Now West would have to lead either a heart or a diamond, which would permit declarer to throw away his losing club while ruffing the trick in dummy; or, instead, West would have to lead away from his (presumed) king of clubs, enabling dummy's queen to win the trick.

## HAND 5

The following deal was played by one of our all-time greats, B. J. Becker. It is a hand where the proper line of play is difficult to find. Yet, on simple analysis, there is really no alternative line.

NORTH		
♠	A Q	
♥	Q 9 7 5 2	
♦	K 8 3	
♣	K J 3	
WEST		EAST
♠	10 7 3	♠ K 8 6 5 4 2
♥	6 3	♥ —
♦	Q 10 6 4	♦ J 9 7 5
♣	10 7 5 2	♣ Q 8 6
SOUTH		
♠	J 9	
♥	A K J 10 8 4	
♦	A 2	
♣	A 9 4	

West opened the four of diamonds against Ben's *six heart* contract, which he won with his ace. To the non-expert, success would appear to hinge on either the spade or the club finesse being right. In other words, declarer has two separate 50-50 chances to fulfill his contract. As Ben played it, he had *three* chances, and needed but one of them to fulfill his contract.

Upon winning the diamond lead, he drew trumps, after which he cashed the king of diamonds and then ruffed a diamond. Now came the ace of spades—and then the queen of spades, throwing East into the lead, and making him the victim of an end-play:



NORTH			
♠	—		
♥	Q 9 7		
♦	—		
♣	K J 3		
WEST		EAST	
♠	3	♠	8 6
♥	—	♥	—
♦	Q	♦	5
♣	10 7 5 2	♣	Q 8 6
		SOUTH	
		♠	—
		♥	J 10 8
		♦	—
		♣	A 9 4

If East now led back either a spade or a diamond, declarer would discard his four of clubs while simultaneously ruffing the trick in dummy. Of course, if East led a club, it would be into the jaws of dummy's K-J-3 combination.

But suppose that West had held the king of spades. When he would be thrown into the lead (at trick seven), if he led a spade or a diamond, again declarer would ruff in dummy while, on this trick, he would toss away his losing club. And, if West led a club instead, declarer would play low from dummy. If East played the queen (as he would have today), declarer would be home. Assuming, however, that East played the (hypothetical) ten-spot, declarer would take it with the ace, and finesse West for the (hypothetical) club queen.

Playing the hand as Becker did, he would make his contract if East held the spade king, or if West held either the queen or the ten of clubs. Putting it another way, declarer, playing correctly, would go down only if West had the spade king, and East held both the club queen and ten. And nobody could be so unlucky as to find three key cards adversely located.

## HAND 6

One of the reasons behind the evoking of end-plays is to eliminate

the undesired taking of finesses. As can be appreciated, no expert wants to stake his existence on a 50-50 proposition.

On the deal which follows, a superficial glance at the North-South cards would seem to indicate that the fulfillment of South's slam contract depended on a successful club finesse. In the play, the finesse was totally unnecessary.

NORTH			
♠	K Q J 6 5		
♥	A J 7		
♦	8 7		
♣	7 6 4		
WEST		EAST	
♠	7 4	♠	3
♥	10 9 8 5	♥	K Q 4 3 2
♦	Q 10 6 2	♦	J 9 5
♣	K 5 3	♣	J 10 9 8
SOUTH			
♠	A 10 9 8 2		
♥	6		
♦	A K 4 3		
♣	A Q 2		

Against South's *six spade* contract, West led the heart ten, dummy's ace winning. A heart was then ruffed high, after which the ace and king of trumps were cashed. Then came the ace and king of diamonds, which was followed by a ruff of a diamond in dummy. The board's last heart was then trumped in the closed hand.

Now declarer led his fourth diamond, West played the queen—and the four of clubs was discarded from dummy. Here was the position at the completion of trick nine, with West on lead.

			NORTH		
			♠ Q J		
			♥ —		
			♦ —		
			♣ 7 6		
	WEST				EAST
♠ —					♠ —
♥ 9					♥ K Q
♦ —					♦ —
♣ K 5 3					♣ J 10 9
			SOUTH		
			♠ 10		
			♥ —		
			♦ —		
			♣ A Q 2		

If West led a club, declarer would get a present of a trick. If, instead, West chose to lead a heart, dummy would discard another club while declarer trumped in his own hand. The dummy would now be high, South's ace of clubs taking care of dummy's remaining club.

What if East, rather than West, had held the queen of diamonds? In this case, when West failed to follow suit to the fourth round of diamonds, declarer would ruff in dummy, and resort to the club finesse. But it must be wrong to accept the club finesse as a first-choice line of play. If it became mandatory, then it would be taken.

## HAND 7

It would be my guess that not one out of a hundred players would play this next hand properly, although a fair proportion of them might make it. In retrospect, all of those who went down would probably feel ashamed of themselves and vow not to do it again.

	NORTH	
	♠ A Q 8 3	
	♥ K J 9 7	
	♦ A 8	
	♣ A 5 3	
WEST		EAST
♠ J 10 7 6		♠ 4
♥ 5 2		♥ 6 4
♦ K 10 9		♦ Q J 6 5 3 2
♣ Q J 10 6		♣ 8 7 4 2
	SOUTH	
	♠ K 9 5 2	
	♥ A Q 10 8 3	
	♦ 7 4	
	♣ K 9	

South reached a *six heart* contract, and West opened the queen of clubs, which was taken by declarer's king. Two rounds of trumps were then drawn. This was followed by a club to the board's ace and a ruff of the board's remaining club. Now came the key play: a spade to dummy's ace. Then the ace of diamonds was cashed, after which the eight of diamonds was led.

It mattered not which of the opponents elected to win this diamond trick, for the winner would be end-played. If East won it, a club or a diamond return would permit declarer to discard his losing spade while ruffing the trick in dummy. If West chose to win the trick, again a club or a diamond return would enable declarer to dispose of his losing spade. And if, instead, West played back a low spade, declarer's nine would win; if West played back the jack of spades, declarer would capture it with his king (East showing out), and then finesse West for the marked ten-spot.

From the outset, declarer's sole worry was that the adverse spades might break 4-1. To guard against this causing his downfall, he stripped both hands of clubs; and when, two tricks later, he led the ace and other diamond, he had stripped both hands of diamonds. But, in between, he made the essential play of cashing the spade ace.

The reasoning behind the latter play was this: if spades were divided 3-2, his contract was always guaranteed. But if they were

divided 4-1 and if the opponent who had the singleton won the diamond lead, he would be compelled to lead one of the minor suits, enabling declarer to ruff in one hand while simultaneously discarding a losing spade from the other hand. And if the one with the original four spades captured the diamond trick, and he returned the spade jack, *he would become the only one who could have had four spades* (since he would have already shown up with two spades), and the trick would then be won by the fourth hand. The holder of the four spades would then be finessed out of his ten-spot.

The reader will note that if the spade ace (or queen) is not cashed prior to the concession of the diamond trick, East can win the diamond and exit with his singleton spade, West's ten forcing dummy's queen. (Or, for that matter, West can win the diamond trick, and return the spade jack, or, better still, the ten-spot.) Declarer will now have to guess which of the opponents has the other spade honor—and even our best players guess incorrectly at times.

## HAND 8

This final end-play deal arose in the National Championships of 1951. Every expert player would play the hand to set up an end-play situation. But many of them would set up an end-play that wouldn't work, instead of developing the correct end-play that would work.

NORTH		
♠	A 5 4	
♥	8	
♦	10 5	
♣	A Q 9 8 6 4 3	
WEST		EAST
♠	9 7 6	♠ K 10 8
♥	J 10 9 7	♥ K 6 4 3 2
♦	Q 9 6 4	♦ J 8 7 3 2
♣	K 2	♣ —
SOUTH		
♠	Q J 3 2	
♥	A Q 5	
♦	A K	
♣	J 10 7 5	

South, after opening the bidding with one club, became the declarer at a *six club* contract. West led the jack of hearts, and declarer won the trick with the queen.

It was apparent that the success of the contract depended on not losing two tricks to the two black kings, and the thought of an end-play was already crystalizing in declarer's mind. The hope was to get East to lead away from the spade king (if West had the king of spades, a simple finesse would take care of him), thereby eliminating any spade losers. (Dummy's third spade could always be discarded on declarer's ace of hearts.)

In terms of planning for the end-play, most declarers would promptly cash the ace of clubs, with the wishful thinking embodied that they might catch the king. But, if they didn't, they would then eliminate diamonds from both hands, and follow up by playing the ace of hearts, a spade being tossed from dummy. They would next ruff their last heart, eliminating hearts from both hands, to arrive at this position:

NORTH	
♠	A 5
♥	—
♦	—
♣	Q 9 8 6 4
SOUTH	
♠	Q J 3 2
♥	—
♦	—
♣	10 7 5

They would now lead a trump, to be won by East's hoped-for king, and East would be a "dead duck": a heart or a diamond return by him would enable declarer to ruff in one hand while discarding the losing spade from dummy. A spade return, instead, would give declarer a free finesse for the king.

But our actual declarer, Lorraine Heinrich, of Detroit, gave the hand a much finer play. After winning the opening heart lead with the queen, she ruffed a heart, cashed the ace and king of diamonds,

and then cashed the ace of hearts, discarding the board's four of spades. She then led the jack of clubs and finessed. When it won, the slam was assured.

Suppose, however, that the finesse had lost to East's (hypothetical) king, which would have had to be, in this case, a singleton. Wouldn't East now be end-played? Whether he led a diamond, a heart, or a spade, dummy's spade loser would disappear.

Thus, whether the trump finesse won or lost, the contract became a certainty as Lorraine played it.

## THE SQUEEZE PLAY

It is an accepted fact that the squeeze play is probably the most exciting and the most fascinating of the advanced plays. To most players, the squeeze seems so complex that they will make no attempt to understand the meaning and inner workings of the play; and, as a consequence, slam contracts which should be made, if only declarer were familiar with the squeeze, become doomed to defeat.

Actually, the squeeze is not a complicated play, and not at all beyond the ability of the serious student to comprehend. Let us now observe how the experts recognize the presence of a squeeze possibility and how they then apply it to accomplish their objective of crushing the opposition.

### HAND 1

The step-by-step bidding of this first deal has long been forgotten. But I do remember that South arrived at a grand slam contract in spades, which West doubled. South, figuring that West had a sure trump trick, decided that he might find a haven at seven no-trump. So he bid the *grand slam at no-trump*, and West, a tenacious sort of fellow, was not going to allow South to escape. He doubled again, and remarked: "This is the end of the line." And so it was—but not for declarer!

NORTH			
♠	K 9 7 6		
♥	2		
♦	A K J 9 8 7		
♣	K Q		
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 10 8 3	♠	—
♥	K Q J 5 4	♥	9 8 3
♦	10 3	♦	6 5 4 2
♣	J 6	♣	10 9 7 4 3 2
SOUTH			
♠	A J 5 4 2		
♥	A 10 7 6		
♦	Q		
♣	A 8 5		

West opened the king of hearts, declarer taking it with his ace. He then cashed the queen of diamonds, entered dummy via the club queen, and ran five more diamonds, upon which he discarded two hearts and three spades. Next came the king of clubs, and this position was reached:

NORTH			
♠	K 9 7 6		
♥	—		
♦	—		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 10 8	♠	—
♥	Q	♥	9
♦	—	♦	—
♣	—	♣	10 9 7
SOUTH			
♠	A J		
♥	10		
♦	—		
♣	A		



The six of spades was now led to declarer's ace, after which the ace of clubs was laid down—and West found himself in the vise of a squeeze. If he threw the queen of hearts, declarer's ten-spot would become a winner. If he discarded a spade instead, declarer's jack of spades would then be led, upon which West would play his now-singleton queen, to be taken by the board's king. The board's nine of spades would then be promoted into declarer's thirteenth trick.

## HAND 2

This deal was played in the National Championships of 1952, and our South declarer was Ben Fain, of Dallas, Texas.

		NORTH	
	♠	9 8 5 2	
	♥	A K	
	♦	K Q J 9 6 2	
	♣	7	
		EAST	
	♠	J 10 7 3	
	♥	10 9 6	
	♦	7 3	
	♣	K 9 5 2	
		SOUTH	
	♠	K Q	
	♥	Q 4	
	♦	A 10 5	
	♣	A Q J 10 8 3	

Ben reached a contract of *six no-trump*, against which West elected to open the spade ace, and to continue with a spade at trick two, South's king winning. Off the top, declarer could count only eleven sure winners, assuming that the club king was in the East hand. (If it weren't, declarer was doomed to defeat.)

Declarer now ran dummy's six diamonds, discarding three clubs from his own hand. He then played the ace of hearts—and approached the squeeze position:

		NORTH	
		♠	9 8
		♥	K
		♦	—
		♣	7
WEST		EAST	
♠	6	♠	J
♥	J	♥	—
♦	—	♦	—
♣	6 4	♣	K 9 5
		SOUTH	
		♠	—
		♥	Q
		♦	—
		♣	A Q J

Now came the king of hearts—and East was squeezed: If he discarded the spade jack, dummy's spades would become high. If he chose to toss a low club, declarer would now take the club finesse successfully, and then fell East's king with the ace, establishing the jack of clubs as a winner.

### HAND 3

This next deal contains a very lovely squeeze ("lovely" only from the viewpoint of the "squeezer," not the "squeezee"). It is an unusual type of squeeze, in that one defender squeezes his partner, in contrast to the normal type of squeeze, wherein declarer "bear-hugs" a defender to extinction. The deal arose in the National Championships of 1957.

NORTH			
♠	A J 5 4		
♥	Q 2		
♦	8 7 6 5 4 3		
♣	J		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K Q 8 7	♠	10 9 6 3 2
♥	J 6 3	♥	10 9 7 5
♦	K Q 9	♦	J
♣	4 3 2	♣	7 6 5
SOUTH			
♠	—		
♥	A K 8 4		
♦	A 10 2		
♣	A K Q 10 9 8		

Against South's *six no-trump* contract, West led the king of diamonds, which declarer took with his ace. He then ran six club tricks, discarding four diamonds and a spade from dummy. Next came the queen, king, and ace of hearts, a low spade being tossed on the ace of hearts. Here was the position prior to the lead to trick eleven:

NORTH			
♠	A J		
♥	—		
♦	8		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K Q	♠	10 9
♥	—	♥	10
♦	Q	♦	—
♣	—	♣	—
SOUTH			
♠	—		
♥	8		
♦	10 2		
♣	—		

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South now led the eight of hearts—and West was squeezed in mid-air, as it were! If West discarded a diamond, dummy's eight would become supreme; and if, instead, West threw away his spade queen, North would discard the diamond eight, and the jack of spades would produce the twelfth trick.

## HAND 4

This is the deal which was Problem 12 in the preceding chapter.

		NORTH	
		♠	9 4 2
		♥	K 6
		♦	10 7 4 3 2
		♣	A 7 4
		WEST	
		♠	6
		♥	Q J 10
		♦	A K Q 6 5
		♣	K 10 6 3
		EAST	
		♠	8 5
		♥	7 5 4 3 2
		♦	J 9 8
		♣	J 9 8
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K Q J 10 7 3
		♥	A 9 8
		♦	—
		♣	Q 5 2

West opened the bidding with one diamond, and with West and East passing thereafter, South arrived at a *six spade* contract.

West led the king of diamonds, and South discarded the deuce of clubs, permitting West to win the trick. West then shifted to the queen of hearts, dummy's king winning, after which declarer ruffed a diamond. Declarer then picked up the adverse trumps in two rounds. Now came the ace of hearts, and declarer then ruffed his remaining heart. Another diamond was now ruffed, after which declarer played two more rounds of trumps. This was the position just before declarer led his last trump:

		NORTH			
		♠	—		
		♥	—		
		♦	10		
		♣	A 7		
WEST				EAST	
♠	—			♠	—
♥	—			♥	—
♦	K			♦	—
♣	K 10			♣	J 9 8
		SOUTH			
		♠	10		
		♥	—		
		♦	—		
		♣	Q 5		

When declarer led his last trump, West found it impossible to hold on to both the king of diamonds and the ten of clubs. He elected to discard the ten of clubs, and declarer's queen of clubs became his twelfth trick.

## HAND 5

This deal illustrates the *double squeeze*, in which each of the opponents is squeezed simultaneously, on the same trick. The hand was played in 1931, and the declarer was the late Ben Ames Williams, celebrated fiction writer. It will be observed that the West defender gave declarer a bit of help, but that should not be permitted to detract from Mr. Williams' fine performance.

NORTH			
♠	J 5 2		
♥	K Q J 10 3 2		
♦	10		
♣	J 8 5		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K 6 3	♠	10 7 4
♥	9 7	♥	8 6 5
♦	Q 9 8 6	♦	J 7 5 4
♣	A 6 4 3	♣	Q 10 2
SOUTH			
♠	A Q 9 8		
♥	A 4		
♦	A K 3 2		
♣	K 9 7		

South landed in a *six no-trump* contract, with West opening the club ace. He then shifted to a low spade ("Thank you, Mr. Defender"), and declarer took East's ten with his queen.

Mr. Williams then cashed the ace of spades and the king of clubs. He next ran five heart tricks, arriving at this position prior to leading dummy's remaining heart:

NORTH			
♠	J		
♥	2		
♦	10		
♣	J		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K	♠	—
♥	—	♥	—
♦	Q 9 8	♦	J 7 5
♣	—	♣	Q
SOUTH			
♠	9		
♥	—		
♦	A K 3		
♣	—		

Dummy's deuce of hearts was now led; and East, compelled to hold on to the club queen, had to relinquish a diamond. South discarded his nine of spades. West could not toss away his king of spades (if he did, the board's jack would become high), so he, too, had to discard a diamond. Declarer's three of diamonds now became his slam-going trick.

## HAND 6

A type of squeeze which has received a great deal of publicity throughout the years is the one known as the Vienna Coup. This is an expert play made in preparation for a squeeze play. The play consists of deliberately cashing a high card, thereby promoting into supremacy a card of that suit in the opponent's hand—and then proceeding to squeeze him by either forcing him to discard it or to unguard another suit. Here is the Vienna Coup in action:

NORTH					
♠	Q				
♥	6 5 3 2				
♦	A K Q 6 3 2				
♣	A 10				
WEST			EAST		
♠	J 10 8 7 2		♠	K 9 6 5 4 3	
♥	7 4		♥	—	
♦	—		♦	J 10 9 8 7	
♣	J 9 8 7 6 3		♣	K 4	
SOUTH					
♠	A				
♥	A K Q J 10 9 8				
♦	5 4				
♣	Q 5 2				

South reached a *seven heart* contract. West led the jack of spades, which was taken by declarer's ace, after which declarer picked up the outstanding trumps in two rounds. He then led a diamond, which he took with the queen, while receiving the sad news that the adverse diamonds were divided 5-0. The ace of clubs was now cashed (the preparation for a squeeze), after which the closed hand was reentered via a trump. Declarer next played three more rounds

of trumps, and this became the position at the completion of trick nine:

			NORTH		
			♠ —		
			♥ —		
			♦ A K 6 3		
			♣ —		
	WEST			EAST	
	♠ 10			♠ —	
	♥ —			♥ —	
	♦ —			♦ J 10 9	
	♣ J 9 8			♣ K	
			SOUTH		
			♠ —		
			♥ 8		
			♦ 5		
			♣ Q 5		

When South led his last trump—a diamond being discarded from dummy—East found himself unable to protect both the diamonds and the club king. If he parted with a diamond, dummy's six of diamonds would become a winner. If, instead, he discarded the club king, declarer's queen of clubs would become high.

It should be noted that if the ace of clubs had not been cashed, the squeeze would have become inoperative. Suppose that, after drawing trumps and leading a diamond to the queen, declarer had then returned to his own hand to lead the rest of his trumps. This would now be the position at the completion of trick eight:



NORTH			
♠	—	♠	—
♥	—	♥	—
♦	A K 6	♦	J 10 9
♣	A 10	♣	K 4
WEST		EAST	
♠	10 8	♠	—
♥	—	♥	—
♦	—	♦	J 10 9
♣	J 9 8	♣	K 4
SOUTH			
♠	—		
♥	8		
♦	5		
♣	Q 5 2		

When declarer would now lead his last trump, discarding the club ten, East would simply discard his four of clubs, knowing that declarer could never again return to his own hand to cash the club queen. But with the earlier cashing of the ace of clubs, when declarer subsequently discarded the ten of clubs, declarer's queen became the "threat" card; and East could not discard the club king.

## HAND 7

When the following deal was played in the National Mixed-Team-of-Four Championships of 1952, nothing spectacular happened—declarer went down a trick at his slam contract. At the post-mortem which ensued, analysis revealed that the contract was makable—except that nobody could have been that clairvoyant to have played it the makable way.

NORTH			
♠	6 2	♠	—
♥	K J 9 7 3	♥	A Q 5
♦	K J 5	♦	10 9
♣	8 6 3	♣	A K Q 10 9 7 5 2
WEST		EAST	
♠	A 4	♠	—
♥	10 8 6 4 2	♥	A Q 5
♦	Q 8 6 3	♦	10 9
♣	J 4	♣	A K Q 10 9 7 5 2
SOUTH			
♠	K Q J 10 9 8 7 5 3	♠	—
♥	—	♥	A Q 5
♦	A 7 4 2	♦	10 9
♣	—	♣	A K Q 10 9 7 5 2

After East had opened the bidding with five clubs, South bid five spades, which North carried to *six spades*. West opened the ace of spades, and then led another spade, South winning. Eventually, South took a diamond finesse, which won, but there was no way of preventing West from making a diamond trick.

The six spade contract could be made in this manner: Win the second trick with dummy's six of spades, then play the king of hearts; East covers with the ace, and you ruff. Now finesse for the queen of diamonds, winning the trick with dummy's jack. Then lead the jack of hearts, East puts up the queen, and you ruff. *West* now has the high heart (the ten-spot); your dummy has the second-highest heart, the nine-spot.

Now you run trumps, and the position prior to leading the last trump is this:

	NORTH	
	♠	—
	♥	9
	♦	K 5
	♣	8
WEST		EAST
♠	—	♠ —
♥	10	♥ —
♦	Q 8 6	♦ 10
♣	—	♣ A K Q
	SOUTH	
	♠	7
	♥	—
	♦	A 7 4
	♣	—

When you lead your last trump, West is squeezed: For him to discard the ten of hearts would result in the establishment of dummy's nine; for him to discard a diamond would enable declarer to cash three diamond tricks.

Now let us get back to reality.

## HAND 8

On this final squeeze deal, declarer reached a horrible grand slam contract, but with a fortunate distribution of the adverse diamonds, *plus* a working knowledge of the simple squeeze, he fulfilled it.

NORTH		
♠	J 3 2	
♥	9 6	
♦	Q 10 8 7 4 2	
♣	7 5	
WEST		EAST
♠	10 9 8 6 5	♠ Q
♥	K 7 3 2	♥ Q J 10 8 5 4
♦	A K J 3	♦ 9 6 5
♣	—	♣ 8 6 4
SOUTH		
♠	A K 7 4	
♥	A	
♦	—	
♣	A K Q J 10 9 3 2	

Against South's *seven club* contract, West led the king of diamonds, South ruffing. Declarer's best hope to make this "impossible" hand seemed to him to rest on one of the opponents possessing a doubleton queen of spades and just one trump. If this situation existed, then, after drawing one round of trumps, and winning the ace and king of spades (dropping the queen), declarer could cash the spade jack, return to his own hand, and ruff the fourth spade with dummy's remaining trump.

So, at trick two, he led the trump ace, and followed up with the ace of spades, catching East's queen! Suddenly, things had improved tremendously: West was known to have the ace of diamonds and the remainder of the spades. Conditions were ripe for a squeeze.

Declarer next drew trumps, cashed the heart ace, and then played more trumps. Here was the setup prior to the leading of his last trump:

NORTH			
♠	J 3		
♥	—		
♦	Q 10		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	10 9 8	♠	—
♥	—	♥	Q J
♦	A	♦	9 6
♣	—	♣	—
		SOUTH	
		♠	K 7 4
		♥	—
		♦	—
		♣	2

On the lead of the deuce of trumps, West was forced to relinquish either the diamond ace or a spade. If he threw the diamond ace, dummy's queen would become a winner. And, if he discarded a spade instead, declarer would win three spade tricks.

## THE TRUMP COUP

This is a play where declarer holds a finessing position in the trump suit over his right-hand opponent—but he has no trump to lead from the dummy. Nevertheless, he is able to finesse his right-hand opponent by leading some other suit from dummy at a *precise* moment, thereby *forcing* his right-hand opponent to trump the trick. Declarer then overtrumps, and the result comes out exactly the same as a finesse that worked.

Here is a deal which illustrates the trump coup (this play is also known as the “trump-reducing play”):

		NORTH	
		♠	A 6 4 2
		♥	J 10
		♦	A Q 7
		♣	A 9 5 2
WEST		EAST	
♠	Q 10 9 8	♠	K J 7 5
♥	—	♥	K 7 6 4
♦	J 10 9 6	♦	5 4 2
♣	J 8 6 4 3	♣	Q 10
		SOUTH	
		♠	3
		♥	A Q 9 8 5 3 2
		♦	K 8 3
		♣	K 7

South reached a *seven heart* contract, against which West opened the diamond jack. Our declarer recognized that the only worry on the hand—if a worry were to arise—was that East might have the four missing trumps, in which case the contract could be fulfilled only by means of a coup. The coup could be accomplished only if declarer were able to ruff three times in his own hand (to reduce his trump length to equal that of East's); and at trick twelve to have the lead in dummy, so that declarer's A-Q of trumps could entrap East's K-x. Hence, dummy had to be reached four times: three times to reduce his trump length, and the fourth time to "coup" East.

All of the above may seem to be a waste of time, since East certainly doesn't figure to hold the four missing trumps. But, to the expert playing a grand slam contract, there is no such thing as a waste of time if one's thoughts are concerned with handling every conceivable danger, no matter how implausible or unlikely its possibility of occurrence is.

So declarer won the opening diamond lead with his king (to preserve dummy's entries), after which he led a spade to the board's ace. The jack of trumps was led next, and the finesse taken successfully. When West failed to follow suit, declarer had just become a hero (for his "planning"), no matter what the eventual outcome would be.

The ten of hearts was then finessed, after which declarer ruffed a

spade. Dummy was re-entered via the diamond queen, and another spade was ruffed. Again dummy was re-entered, this time with the ace of diamonds, and a third round of spades was ruffed by South.

To trick ten, declarer cashed his king of clubs; to trick eleven, declarer led a club to dummy's ace. To trick twelve, declarer played a club off dummy, and East, holding the K-7 of trumps, was lost, for declarer's last two cards were the A-Q of trumps.

Incidentally, it should be mentioned that the most famous trump coup is the Grand Coup. While this sounds supercomplex, it is precisely the same play as the trump coup just illustrated. The only difference is that the trump-reducing play is accomplished by ruffing one, two (or more) of dummy's *winning* tricks, instead of low, losing cards; that is, if dummy's spades had consisted of, let us say, the A-K-x-x of spades, or the A-K-Q-x, or the A-K-Q-J, then declarer would have executed a Grand Coup.

The sole reason that I can think of for mentioning the Grand Coup is that it is occasionally a topic of conversation amongst bridge players—and I certainly do not want my readers to appear to be ignorant.

## THE DUMMY-REVERSAL PLAY

Generally speaking, bridge authorities have never considered this play to be an advanced one. In experience, however, so many bridge players seem to develop the identical type of blind spot when confronted with hands on which the dummy-reversal play is absolutely called for that I have included an illustration of the play in this advanced section.

Before illustrating the dummy-reversal play, a brief description of it is in order. Normally, declarer's attitude is to view his own hand as the supreme one, and the dummy's hand as the secondary, or supplementary one. When he looks over his losing tricks, he generally does so from the viewpoint of his own hand. In virtually all deals, this approach is the correct one. But there are certain types of situations in which the declarer's hand should be looked upon as the secondary holding of the partnership. After all, since it makes no difference which hand wins the majority of the tricks as long as the partnership gathers them in, the rational approach is to view your

prospects from the standpoint of the combined hands. If it seems advisable to make dummy the declarer, to transpose yourself to thinking in terms of the open hand being the declarer, then you must do so. The essence of the dummy-reversal play is the thinking in terms of dummy being the declarer; and the basic feature of this play is to *do the ruffing in the closed hand*.

Here, then, is the dummy-reversal play:

NORTH		
♠	7 6 3	
♥	K 10 9 8	
♦	Q 5 4	
♣	K 3 2	
WEST		EAST
♠	Q 10 9 5	♠ 4 2
♥	7 2	♥ 5 4 3
♦	10 6 3	♦ 8 7 2
♣	Q J 10 7	♣ A 9 8 6 4
SOUTH		
♠	A K J 8	
♥	A Q J 6	
♦	A K J 9	
♣	5	

South arrived at a *six heart* contract. At a casual glance, it appears as though the contract hinged on a finesse for the queen of spades. Familiarity with the dummy-reversal play eliminated this optical illusion.

West opened the queen of clubs, the king was played from dummy, and East won the trick with his ace. East returned a club, which South ruffed with the jack. The six of hearts was then led to dummy's eight, and dummy's remaining club was ruffed with declarer's ace.

Now came the queen of hearts, which was overtaken by the board's king, after which dummy's ten of trumps picked up East's last trump. On this latter trick, the eight of spades was discarded from declarer's hand; and on dummy's last trump, declarer discarded his jack of spades. The small slam was now there for the taking.



## 8

# THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EXPERT MIND

In the nine deals which comprise this chapter, the narration and/or analysis is done by the experts whose names follow. I have added nothing, for their analysis is sound and self-explanatory.

Narration or Analysis by:

Hand 1—Theodore A. Lightner  
Hand 2—Waldemar von Zedtwitz  
Hand 3—Alfred Sheinwold  
Hand 4—Alphonse Moyse, Jr.  
Hand 5—Lee Hazen  
Hand 6—John Crawford  
Hand 7—Sidney Aronson  
Hand 8—Albert H. Morehead  
Hand 9—Richard Frey

### HAND 1—Bad Guess or Bad Play<sup>1</sup>

One of the world's greatest players has said to me a number of times: "There are no good or bad guesses; there are only good plays and bad plays." By this he meant that in every hand there is some clue—something in the bidding, the play, the distribution of one's own hand and dummy, or even in the mannerisms or demeanor of the opponents—which will give a keen player an indication as to the location of a missing queen or jack, or as to the probable distribution of the opponents' hands.

<sup>1</sup> Theodore A. Lightner. *Bridge World*, June, 1933.

This view, of course, is an extreme one. I must admit that to me the play of many hands seems a complete guess. On the other hand, in the great majority of hands, the theory will certainly apply.

Why is it the mediocre player usually seems to make the wrong "guess," and the expert more often than not the right one? It is because the average player guesses, whereas the expert attempts to draw every possible inference which might enable him to place the missing card, and nine times out of ten finds some clue which guides him to the logical play of the hand.

The following grand slam was played against Harold Vanderbilt and Waldemar von Zedtwitz. There is no "safe" way to play the hand. The method adopted might easily have proved wrong. But at least it was based on logical analysis rather than a blind guess.

NORTH			
♠	A Q J 10 5 3 2		
♥	Q 9 2		
♦	—		
♣	A Q 3		
WEST		EAST	
♠	6	♠	K 7 4
♥	7	♥	5 3
♦	A Q J 10 6	♦	K 8 5 4 3 2
♣	J 10 8 6 4 2	♣	7 5
		SOUTH	
		♠	9 8
		♥	A K J 10 8 6 4
		♦	9 7
		♣	K 9

North-South vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
( <i>Mr. Unknown</i> )	( <i>von Zedtwitz</i> )	( <i>Lightner</i> )	( <i>Vanderbilt</i> )
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♥	4 ♦
5 ♦	6 ♦	6 ♥	Pass
7 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

The opening lead was the jack of clubs, which I won with the

king. It will be seen that there are three ways of playing the hand. One is to play only one round of trumps and then, in the hope that the opponent with the last trump neither is void in spades nor has less than three clubs, to play three rounds of clubs, discard a spade, and ruff two diamonds in dummy. The second way is to finesse the spade after drawing trumps. The third is to draw trumps, get rid of a spade on a high club and play Mr. von Zedtwitz for the king of spades. All three trumps in one hand would make the third method impracticable.

Now, ordinarily play number one would appear safest, as only an abnormal break in spades or clubs would defeat it. However, in this hand two considerations led me to adopt play number three: First, the free bid of six diamonds by East, coupled with the freak distribution of dummy, made a spade void seem a distinct possibility. Second, I had already more or less concluded that the king of spades was in von Zedtwitz's hand. There were two reasons leading to this conclusion: First, Mr. Vanderbilt's four diamond bid would tend to show he did *not* hold the king, for there are very few high cards missing, and the possession of this card, in front of the spade bid, would tend to *weaken* his hand. This inference is merely a straw in the wind, and no sure thing, as, after all, he might nevertheless hold this card.

But Mr. von Zedtwitz's bid of six diamonds tended to indicate to me at least one sure thing, and that was that he had, or thought he had, defense, if not against six, at least against seven. In fact, I was so sure of this that when my partner bid seven, I regretted my rashness in bidding six hearts instead of passing the six diamond bid. (Mr. von Zedtwitz afterward told me that his purpose in bidding six diamonds was to induce us to contract for a grand slam. As I could not hold more than two diamonds—deduced from the bidding, since West had to have a minimum of five diamonds—his king of spades appeared to be a probable winner.)

My reading of Mr. von Zedtwitz's bidding was as follows: He is creating the appearance of making a desperate show of strength for the purpose of keeping us out of a grand slam, whereas in reality he hopes we will contract for it.

Accordingly, I drew the trumps, and led two more rounds of clubs, discarding a spade. After the third round of clubs, there was no

longer a guess as to the location of the spade king, for Mr. Vanderbilt was marked with six clubs, at least five diamonds, and a heart—and had, at most, therefore, one spade. Then came the ace of spades, the queen of spades—and East's king was trapped. Of course, the queen of trumps still remained in dummy as a re-entry.

Had I adopted the best method on mere mathematical possibilities—that of cross-ruffing the hand—the ruff by East of the third round of clubs would have made it impossible to fulfill the contract.

## HAND 2

The following deal is one of Waldemar von Zedtwitz's favorites. His prefatory comment to the hand was: "Have you ever noticed that a poor player will often be penalized for being a poor player on a hand where he has not made the slightest semblance of a mistake."

NORTH			
♠	4 2		
♥	A K Q 9 8		
♦	7 6 3		
♣	A 8 3		
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 5	♠	9 8 7 6 3
♥	10 5 4 3	♥	J 6
♦	J 10 9 8	♦	A 5 4 2
♣	Q 6 4	♣	10 5
SOUTH			
♠	A K Q 10		
♥	7 2		
♦	K Q		
♣	K J 9 7 2		

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
6 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

After two rounds of diamonds, South's sole problem was to avoid a trump loser. Mathematically, this is an open-and-shut situation. You go to the ace of clubs, return a low club, and take the finesse. Waldy, however, was curious to see if he could discover anything about the situation that might alter the mathematics. He led to the heart ace and trumped dummy's last diamond. Then he cashed two high spades and, when the jack dropped from the West hand, South led the queen.

When West discarded, von Zedtwitz was sure of one thing, at least: Whatever else he might hold in clubs, West did *not* have the ten—he would have trumped with that card to force the ace. And the fact that he hadn't trumped at all strongly suggested that West held the queen. The jack of clubs was led, and when West ducked, declarer let it ride. Of course it would have done West no good to cover, for East's ten was up for grabs on the next club lead.

Waldy's comment was: "A good player with the West hand would probably have trumped with the six of clubs. Would I have guessed right then? I don't know. Maybe not. But if West was someone I didn't think I could outguess, I would be wrong to take the risk of getting set if someone got a ruff while I was 'fooling around.'"

### HAND 3

		NORTH	
		♠	5
		♥	10 9 8 5
		♦	K J 6 5 2
		♣	A K 5
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 7 6 3	♠	A 10 8 4 2
♥	K 6	♥	3
♦	8 7	♦	10 4 3
♣	Q J 10 9 4	♣	8 7 3 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q 9
		♥	A Q J 7 4 2
		♦	A Q 9
		♣	6

North-South vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 ♦	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opened the queen of clubs, and dummy won with the king. I<sup>2</sup> saw that I would be in trouble if I lost the trump finesse, since West would return a spade before I could get discards on the threatening diamonds.

To prevent this (with wishful thinking embodied) I immediately cashed dummy's ace of clubs, discarding the nine of diamonds from my own hand. I then took a trump finesse, losing to West's King.

This should have seemed very fishy to West. Was it likely that I had started with a singleton in each minor suit? As it happened, however, West did not think too deeply. He assumed that South had obtained his discard and that it was up to him, West, to cut down dummy's ability to ruff spades. Hence he led a trump.

I had the politeness to keep my face expressionless as I won the trump, cashed my top diamonds, and then entered dummy with a trump to discard all of my spades on dummy's extra diamonds.

## HAND 4

		NORTH	
		♠	K Q 9 2
		♥	A K 10
		♦	K 7 5 2
		♣	A 6
WEST	EAST		
♠ J 4 3	♠ 6		
♥ 8 6	♥ Q J 7 4 2		
♦ J 6 4 3	♦ 10 8		
♣ K J 7 5	♣ Q 10 9 4 3		
		SOUTH	
		♠	A 10 8 7 5
		♥	9 5 3
		♦	A Q 9
		♣	8 2

North-South vulnerable. South dealer.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Sheinwold.

SOUTH ( <i>Moyse</i> )	WEST ( <i>Hazen</i> )	NORTH ( <i>Mrs. Rhodes</i> )	EAST ( <i>Fishbein</i> )
1 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	5 NT	Pass
6 ♣	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hazen (West) opened a low trump. I<sup>3</sup> won with the eight and drew two more rounds, ending in my own hand. Then, to give myself an extra chance, I tried the double heart finesse. Fishbein took the ten with the jack and returned a heart. I collected dummy's ace and king and saw Hazen discard a club.

I led a low diamond to my ace and took note of Fishbein's eight-spot. When I then cashed the diamond queen, the fall of the ten on my right gave me something to think about! In a case of this sort, I for one would really prefer not to get such a drop of cards, because, with unimportant spots falling from Fishbein's hand, there would be only one possible play for the contract—to break the diamonds 3-3. As it was, I had the sort of guess that I don't relish! (Does anybody?)

I laid down another trump and discarded dummy's club six; but, needless to say, that didn't bring me much information. Neither defender was apt to give up a diamond at this stage! So I led the diamond nine, and when Hazen played the six, I went into quite a huddle.

There wasn't much to go by. Fishbein would have played the ten of diamonds on the second round from J-10-8 just as quickly as from 10-8 blank. Of course there was the mathematical fact that a 4-2 break of the suit was more likely than a 3-3 break—but it was not that point which clinched my decision to let the nine ride. *It was Hazen's lead of a trump at trick one.* He had had three spades and two worthless hearts. If he had held three worthless diamonds, I felt that he would have tried a stab lead rather than the passive trump lead. In other words, I thought that his only reason for selecting the trump was that he had *some* protection in *two* suits, not just in clubs. Such subtle factors exert quite a bit of influence over an expert's lead against a slam. (Afterward, Hazen admitted that he *had* been influenced by his possible stopper in both minors.)

<sup>3</sup> Alphonse ("Sonny") Moyse, Jr.

## HAND 5

When this hand occurred in the early 1930's, Lee Hazen was just beginning to play bridge. Here is his tale concerning it:

		NORTH	
		♠	9 7 2
		♥	K Q 2
		♦	10 9 7 6 5
		♣	9 6
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	J 8 3
♥	8 7 6 4	♥	J 10 9 5 3
♦	J 8 3 2	♦	A K Q 4
♣	J 10 8 5 4	♣	3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A K Q 10 6 5 4
		♥	A
		♦	—
		♣	A K Q 7 2

North-South vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	2 ♥
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	6 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

I held the East hand and I was quite disappointed when declarer ruffed the first round of diamonds, my partner having happened to choose a diamond opening.

Declarer went into a long trance, and finally came out of it by cashing the ace of hearts and then leading the ten of spades. My partner discarded a low heart, and I acted like the typical young lawyer I was. The first thing you learn in law school is to be suspicious. You spend several hours a day being suspicious of people, of things, and of ideas. If you're really good, you eventually develop the ability to be just abstractly suspicious.

I found it easy to be suspicious at this moment. What was declarer



trying to do to me? I didn't bother to work it out. I just knew that if declarer wanted me to take the jack of spades it couldn't be good for me to oblige him. So I played the three of spades and stared at declarer with a cold legal eye.

South went into a new trance and then led the king and ace of clubs. By this time I was carried away by the spirit of the thing. I had refused one trump trick and nobody was going to bully me into taking another.

So I discarded a heart instead of ruffing, and South struggled quietly for a few more tricks but then went down.

## HAND 6

		NORTH	
		♠	A Q 8 4
		♥	A K
		♦	K 5 2
		♣	A J 9 8
WEST		EAST	
♠	10 7 6	♠	J 3 2
♥	10 8 6	♥	J
♦	9 6	♦	A Q 10 4 3
♣	K 7 5 4 2	♣	Q 10 6 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	K 9 5
		♥	Q 9 7 5 4 3 2
		♦	J 8 7
		♣	—

Both sides vulnerable. East dealer.

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
( <i>A. Landy</i> )	( <i>J. Crawford</i> )	( <i>S. Mogal</i> )	( <i>B. J. Becker</i> )
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	6 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Becker, one of the most careful players in the world, huddled for what seemed like an hour (probably just over a minute) before he bid six hearts. He reasoned that the play for seven was probably not

very good, and that "scientific" bidding was inferior to a direct leap if his side stopped at six.

He was right. "Science" might have revealed the diamond weakness, and Mogal might have made the killing diamond lead. With no bidding to guide him, Mogal opened the four of clubs.

Looks like duck soup, doesn't it? Seven trumps, four spades, and the ace of clubs. Actually, it gave Crawford quite a headache.

Crawford played the eight of clubs from dummy and ruffed Landy's ten. On the ace and king of trumps Landy followed with the jack of hearts and the ten of diamonds. Crawford ruffed a club and ran two more trumps, discarding low diamonds from the dummy. East meanwhile parted with a couple of low diamonds, while West released a low club.

Crawford now led the nine of spades to dummy's queen, discarded a diamond on the ace of clubs, and returned to his hand with the king of spades to lead the last trump. West discarded a club, so did dummy, and so did East.

What was the problem? Simply that Mogal had played the seven and ten of spades on the first two rounds of that suit. It looked as though Landy might now hold the blank ace of diamonds and J-6 of spades. If so, the slam depended on putting East in with the ace of diamonds to lead up to dummy's A-8 of spades.

Crawford pondered the matter long and painfully. This was a key decision, and he didn't want to be wrong. Finally, he led another spade and played for the 3-3 break, making the slam.

The important clue was Landy's first discard of the ten of diamonds. He would never have signalled so violently with diamonds headed only by A-10. Hence his last three cards had to include the A-Q of diamonds. The third card was surely a spade, since if Mogal (West) had held J-10-7-5, he would not have played the ten on the second round.

## HAND 7

On the following deal,<sup>4</sup> a favorable opening lead, plus a little ingenuity, led to the fulfillment of an overambitious slam.

<sup>4</sup> Narration by Sidney Aronson.

NORTH			
♠	10 8 5 3		
♥	Q 7 6 4 2		
♦	10 9		
♣	K 6		
WEST		EAST	
♠	K 9	♠	J 6
♥	J 10 9 3	♥	8 5
♦	K J 5 2	♦	A Q 8 6 4 3
♣	8 7 4	♣	10 5 2
SOUTH			
♠	A Q 7 4 2		
♥	A K		
♦	7		
♣	A Q J 9 3		

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♣	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Though you expected to see both black kings in dummy, your disappointment was slightly assuaged by the favorable opening of the jack of hearts. With a diamond opening, there would be no choice but to play East for the K-x of trumps, substantially less than a 50-50 chance.

Deciding that the heart opening gave you a better percentage play than risking the whole hand on the trump situation, you win the first trick with the heart ace and cash the spade ace, East and West both following with small spades. Still hopeful, you cash the heart king, cross to the club king in dummy, and play the heart queen, hoping to shake your losing diamond if it lives or is ruffed with the spade king. East, however, ruffs in with the spade jack, forcing you to overruff with the spade queen, which now leaves the spade king as the only outstanding trump.

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You now have one more chance, which is to find the opponent who has the spade king with an original holding of three or more clubs. You next play high clubs, shaking one of the dummy's diamonds on the third round and the other on the fourth round, which West helplessly ruffs with the spade king. You chalk up a slam.

Congratulations on a fine execution of an overbid slam! That's really playing 'em to the hilt!

### HAND 8

The following classic hand,<sup>5</sup> which was played in 1945, has a point that many a famous player fell down on.

		NORTH	
		♠	A K 8 3
		♥	Q 9 7 6 5 2
		♦	6
		♣	K 5
WEST		EAST	
♠	6	♠	10 4 2
♥	J 10 8 4	♥	3
♦	Q J 9	♦	K 10 7 4
♣	J 10 9 8 3	♣	Q 7 6 4 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	Q J 9 7 5
		♥	A K
		♦	A 8 5 3 2
		♣	A

Neither side vulnerable. West dealer.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	7 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opened the jack of clubs and South won with the ace. South then laid down the jack of spades. So far, declarer plus the various people who later essayed to make the contract all played the same.

<sup>5</sup> Narration by Albert Morehead.

The question concerns South's next lead. Declarer didn't do right. He led the five of spades to dummy's king. Then, suddenly realizing that if the hearts didn't break 3-2, he would not have enough entries to dummy to establish the suit and get back to run it, he tried to cash the ace and king of hearts. East ruffed the second round of hearts and declarer was down one. It didn't matter anyway; South might just as well have gone down on the fifth trick as on a later one. Once he took the second round of spades he had thrown away his grand slam.

South was a good player, and his downfall should probably be attributed to carelessness in the face of an apparent superabundance of wealth, rather than to inability to figure out the proper line of play. After he took his licking, he showed the declarer's and dummy's hands to several of his expert friends, and only about half of them played so as to make the contract.

Yet the proper play is quite obvious when you stop to consider. If the hearts break 5-0, the contract can't be made (unless the defender void in hearts held a singleton trump, in which case it is safe to play a heart after the first round of trumps). If the hearts break no worse than 4-1, it is perfectly safe to cash a high heart before leading a second trump. Therefore, the ace of hearts should be cashed at trick three.

Having got this round of hearts through, South proceeds to take a second round of trumps, leading to the king. When the trumps don't break, he makes his contract absolutely safe by leading the king of clubs and discarding his king of hearts. Now he ruffs a low heart, not caring whether the suit breaks or not, draws the last trump with a lead to dummy's spade ace, and ruffs another low heart with his last trump. Dummy is left with an established heart suit and the eight of trumps for entry. Thirteen tricks are in.

## HAND 9

In this deal, counting is the key. Declarer's count led him<sup>6</sup> to the play that gave him his best chance; it failed only because West also was in there counting.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Frey.

		NORTH		
		♠ A Q 6 3		
		♥ Q J 8		
		♦ 9 3 2		
		♣ A 8 4		
WEST				EAST
♠ —				♠ 5 4 2
♥ 10 9 6 3 2				♥ 7 5
♦ K J 10 6 5 4				♦ Q
♣ K Q				♣ J 10 9 7 6 5 2
		SOUTH		
		♠ K J 10 9 8 7		
		♥ A K 4		
		♦ A 8 7		
		♣ 3		

East-West vulnerable. North dealer.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

When South won the opening lead of the king of clubs with dummy's ace, he immediately led and ruffed a club, returned to dummy with a trump, and ruffed North's last club. Two more spade leads bailed East out; and, after cashing two high hearts, South paused for a recount.

East was known to have started with seven clubs and three spades; he had already played two hearts. That left only one unknown card. If it was another heart, South had no chance to escape two losing diamonds; his only hope was that East's unknown card was a diamond big enough to win the first diamond trick; in that case he'd have to lead a club and South could shake a diamond while dummy trumped.

But if South cashed his last heart before leading the diamonds, East, if he was alert, could escape the throw-in by getting rid of his

dangerous diamond. So declarer, who had been careful to win the second heart in his own hand, now led a low diamond!

It would have been so easy for West to slip and simply play a diamond high enough to top dummy's nine! But he too had counted out his partner's singleton diamond and he made the only play that could save the slam—the diamond king! That let him hold the lead and continue the suit, establishing a second diamond trick and squashing South's diabolical plot.





## EPILOGUE

### “Well Done!”

It is a part of Navy tradition that when a ship and its complement have gone through a period of tribulation and have come through it with honor and glory, the commanding officer will salute them with the commendation: “Well done!” To those gifted heroes whose exploits have paraded in review before us, we salute them with a “Well done!” for their achievements.

The twelve deals in this section are introduced to serve as a reminder that our experts do not rest on their hard-earned laurels. Their past accomplishments are but a prelude to future accomplishments of the same type. And, just as they will continue to march triumphantly to greater heights and to greater glory, it is my hope that you, the reader, will march along with them—and, in time, become accepted by them as an equal.

#### EXHIBIT 1—1952

		NORTH	
		♠	J 9 7
		♥	6 4
		♦	K 6
		♣	A J 10 9 7 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	K 10 8 6 5	♠	Q 4 3 2
♥	3	♥	J 8 7 2
♦	8 7 5 3	♦	10 4 2
♣	Q 8 6	♣	5 4
		SOUTH	
		♠	A
		♥	A K Q 10 9 5
		♦	A Q J 9
		♣	K 2

South landed in a *seven heart* contract. West opened the six of spades and East's queen fell to South's ace. The ace and king of trumps were then played, revealing that East held the guarded jack. If the contract were to be fulfilled, a coup would be necessary.

The deuce of clubs was led next—and dummy's nine-spot was finessed! A spade was then trumped, after which the king of clubs was overtaken by the ace. A club was now ruffed, East discarding a diamond. Next, declarer led a diamond to the king and played the high jack of clubs—and East was a “goner.” He could trump now, or trump later as declarer ran dummy's established clubs, but whatever he chose to do, declarer would overtrump and then pick up East's remaining trump.

Of course, if West had put up the club queen (forcing dummy's ace) when declarer led the deuce of clubs from his own hand at trick four, then later declarer would have been unable to overtake the club king with the ace, to obtain a needed entry to dummy. Declarer would then have been compelled to lose a trick to East's jack of trumps eventually—and you would never have heard of this deal. My thanks to an unknown West are hereby recorded.

## EXHIBIT 2—1961

NORTH			
♠	K Q J 10 6		
♥	Q J 9		
♦	A K 7 5 2		
♣	—		
WEST		EAST	
♠	8 5 3 2	♠	9 7
♥	K	♥	A 5
♦	Q 10 6 4	♦	J 9 8
♣	K Q J 6	♣	A 10 9 8 5 2
SOUTH			
♠	A 4		
♥	10 8 7 6 4 3 2		
♦	3		
♣	7 4 3		

This deal was played recently in Washington, D.C. (my home grounds) by one of our rising stars, Andy Gabrilovitch, of Silver

Spring, Maryland. His contract was *six hearts*. After West had opened the king of clubs, and the dummy came into view, Andy was not what one would call overjoyed at his prospects of fulfilling the slam. However, this was not the time for wailing or gnashing one's teeth. There was plenty of time for that later.

One thing was certain: The three missing trumps were divided 2-1; for if either opponent had held the A-K-5, he would have doubled the six heart contract. With that fact as a foundation, Andy went about his business.

The opening club lead was ruffed with dummy's nine-spot. A spade was then led to declarer's ace, after which South's remaining spade was returned to the board's king. Now came the queen of spades—and East ruffed with the five-spot. Of course, Andy over-ruffed, and played a trump, knowing that both the ace and king would fall on this trick. They did, and the contract was made.

The fact that East slipped is not relevant to our discussion. We applaud Andy for his forethought in realizing that, if the proper conditions existed, East might be coaxed into slipping.

## EXHIBIT 3—1959

			NORTH		
			♠ K Q J 7 6 2		
			♥ K 8 6		
			♦ A 9		
			♣ 3 2		
	WEST			EAST	
	♠ 8 4			♠ 10 9 5 3	
	♥ A 10 3			♥ 9 4 2	
	♦ Q J 10 4 3 2			♦ K 8 7	
	♣ J 10			♣ 7 6 5	
			SOUTH		
			♠ A		
			♥ Q J 7 5		
			♦ 6 5		
			♣ A K Q 9 8 4		

The reader may find it hard to swallow, but this deal was played at *six hearts* in the World Championships of 1959—and the North-South pair was none other than the victorious Italian champions.

North won the opening diamond lead, and then played a spade to South's ace. Now came the ace, king, and queen of clubs, West ruffing the latter with the ten of hearts, declarer overruffing with dummy's king. The king of spades was cashed next, the losing diamond being discarded from the South hand.

Now the eight of trumps was led, East followed with the deuce, and declarer played the five-spot from his own hand, finessing East for the nine. West won this trick with his ace, but there was no return which he could make that would prevent declarer from taking the rest of the tricks.

Actually, West returned a diamond, declarer ruffed with his seven of trumps, and then cashed his queen and jack, picking up the adverse pieces. The South hand, containing the established club suit, was now high. Of such stuff are champions made!

My conscience is bothering me: South was not the declarer. North was. But who would believe me if I said that North, on his three-card heart suit, bid hearts first? In the play, I have told the whole truth, trick by trick, except that East opened the seven of diamonds.

## EXHIBIT 4—1952

NORTH					
♠	Q	5 2			
♥	Q	2			
♦	A K	9 5 3			
♣	8	4 3			
WEST		EAST			
♠	K 8 4	♠	7		
♥	J 10 9 7	♥	8 6 5 4 3		
♦	Q 8 4	♦	J 7 6		
♣	K J 2	♣	Q 10 9 7		
SOUTH					
♠	A J	10 9 6 3			
♥	A	K			
♦	10	2			
♣	A	6 5			

Against South's *six spade* contract, West elected to open the jack of hearts. (Had West but known, of course he would have opened a

club.) South took the heart lead with his king, cashed dummy's ace and king of diamonds, and then ruffed a diamond with his nine of spades. It was pleasing to the eye to note that the six adverse diamonds were divided 3-3.

Then came the ace of spades, followed by the jack of spades. West chose to play low (his play did not affect the outcome), and declarer overtook his jack with dummy's queen. The established nine of diamonds was then cashed, declarer discarding a club. West ruffed this trick, and shifted to a club, belatedly. This was taken by South's ace, and dummy was re-entered by means of the five of trumps (declarer having carefully preserved his three-spot) and on the board's last diamond declarer discarded his remaining club.

The reader will note that when declarer led his jack of spades and overtook it with dummy's queen, it didn't matter which of the opponents possessed the trump king. Had East taken this trick with the (hypothetical) king, it would have meant that the adverse trumps were divided 2-2; and the five of trumps, in this case, would have served as a re-entry to cash dummy's established diamonds.

## EXHIBIT 5—1939

		NORTH	
		♠ Q 6 4 3	
		♥ K 7 5	
		♦ 6 3	
		♣ A 9 8 2	
WEST			EAST
♠ —			♠ K J 9
♥ 8 3			♥ 10 9 6 4 2
♦ 10 9 8 5 2			♦ K 7 4
♣ K Q J 10 7 4			♣ 6 5
	SOUTH		
	♠ A 10 8 7 5 2		
	♥ A Q J		
	♦ A Q J		
	♣ 3		

South landed at a *six spade* contract. West's opening lead of the club king was taken by dummy's ace, after which the diamond finesse was tried, with success. A low spade was then led to dummy's queen,

which East took with his king, West showing out. It now became routine to enter dummy via the heart king, and to entrap East's remaining J-9 of trumps.

This is a deal where most players would go wrong. I imagine that, after winning the opening club lead, they would lead a trump to the ace—and go down there and then, for East would now have two trump tricks.

Our declarer realized that the key to fulfillment rested on what happened in the diamond suit. If the finesse worked, then a safety play could (and would) be taken in the trump suit; if the finesse didn't work, then desperation measures, in the form of playing the trump ace to catch the king, would be necessary. Hence, the diamond finesse had to be taken first, and on its outcome would come the knowledge of how to play the trump suit.

When the diamond finesse proved successful, declarer led a low spade, with the intention of putting up the queen if West played low. If either opponent held the three outstanding spades, declarer would be sure of losing just one spade trick, and no more.

## EXHIBIT 6—1937

		NORTH	
		♠	A 9 7
		♥	6 2
		♦	J 8 5 4
		♣	K J 6 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	—	♠	6 3
♥	A K Q J 7 4 3	♥	10 9 8 5
♦	Q 10	♦	A K 9 2
♣	9 8 5 4	♣	Q 7 2
		SOUTH	
		♠	K Q J 10 8 5 4 2
		♥	—
		♦	7 6 3
		♣	A 10

South arrived at a *six spade* contract (honestly, he did!). West opened a top heart, which declarer ruffed. The king of trumps was

then led, after which the queen of trumps was overtaken by the board's ace. A low club was led next and the ten-spot finessed. The ace of clubs was now cashed, dummy re-entered via the nine of trumps, and the king of clubs was laid down. When East's queen dropped, declarer was home, for he was able to discard two of his losing diamonds on dummy's king and jack of clubs. Eventually, he lost a diamond trick, with no regrets.

How come declarer finessed East for the club queen, instead of finessing West? The expert would answer this in three words: "It was automatic."

In order to make his contract, declarer needed four club tricks (to obtain two diamond discards). *If* West held the Q-x-x of clubs, he would cover declarer's ten of clubs when it was led, and East's 9-x-x-x would then effectively prevent declarer from making more than three club tricks. Hence, declarer's only hope was for East to possess either the Q-x or Q-x-x of clubs—and he played accordingly.

## EXHIBIT 7—1946

NORTH		
♠	A Q J 9 5	
♥	10 9	
♦	A	
♣	A J 10 6 4	
WEST		EAST
♠	6	♠ 10 4 2
♥	K 7 2	♥ J 6 5 3
♦	8 7 6 4 3 2	♦ K Q 10 9
♣	8 3 2	♣ Q 7
SOUTH		
♠	K 8 7 3	
♥	A Q 8 4	
♦	J 5	
♣	K 9 5	

One of the recurring guesses in bridge is which way to finesse when you have eight of a suit between you and partner, with the A-J in one hand and the K-10 in the other. Sometimes it's a guess, and

sometimes it's not. The latter situation is demonstrated in the following deal, with B. J. Becker as the South declarer.

Against South's *six spade* contract West opened a diamond, dummy's ace winning. Three rounds of trumps were then taken, ending up in the South hand, after which declarer's remaining diamond was ruffed. Now came the ace and king of clubs; and when East's queen fell, there was no further problem. Subsequently West obtained a heart trick.

Had Becker not caught the queen of clubs, he would have then led a third round of the suit. *If West had the queen*, West would become end-played: If he returned a heart, declarer would obtain a free finesse; and if, instead, West returned a diamond, declarer would discard one of dummy's two hearts, while trumping the trick in his own hand.

If it turned out (theoretically) that East won the third club lead with the queen, then, as a last resort, declarer would take the 50-50 heart finesse. But he wasn't going to take it unless he were forced to do so.

## EXHIBIT 8—1938

		NORTH	
		♠	A Q
		♥	Q 7 5 2
		♦	6 4
		♣	A J 8 7 6
WEST		EAST	
♠	J 8 7 3	♠	K 9 6 5 4 2
♥	3	♥	8 4
♦	K Q J 10 2	♦	8 7 5 3
♣	5 4 3	♣	K
		SOUTH	
		♠	10
		♥	A K J 10 9 6
		♦	A 9
		♣	Q 10 9 2

West opened the king of diamonds against South's *six heart* contract, declarer winning the trick with his ace. Two rounds of trumps were then drawn. Declarer's next play was the queen of clubs; and



when West followed with the three-spot, dummy's ace was put up. As is evident, East's king fell on this trick, and declarer gathered in all thirteen tricks. Declarer was unquestionably lucky, for he certainly didn't figure to catch East with a singleton king. Nevertheless, his play was absolutely correct.

From declarer's point of view, he had a diamond loser and a possible club loser. If he took the club finesse and it lost, he would be down, for East would return a diamond. Hence, he couldn't afford to lose the club finesse—and he made sure that he didn't.

If, when declarer took his queen of clubs with the board's ace, he didn't catch East's king, he would be no better and no worse off with respect to the fulfillment of his contract than he was at the outset. He would then return to his own hand via a trump, and take the spade finesse; and, if it were successful (in theory), he would discard his losing diamond on dummy's ace of spades.

In other words, the play of the ace of clubs was on the house, and it gave declarer an additional chance to fulfill his contract.

## EXHIBIT 9—1950

		NORTH	
		♠	A Q J 6
		♥	K J 7 3
		♦	—
		♣	A J 9 5 3
WEST		EAST	
♠	10 2	♠	K 9 7 4
♥	5 4	♥	8 2
♦	K 8 7 6 4 2	♦	A Q 10 9 5 3
♣	Q 10 7	♣	2
		SOUTH	
		♠	8 5 3
		♥	A Q 10 9 6
		♦	J
		♣	K 8 6 4

Here is a simple hand in which proper play demanded that a finesse be taken, for whether it won or lost, the contract was guaranteed.

West led a diamond against South's *six heart* contract, and

dummy ruffed. Two rounds of trumps came next, picking up the adverse pieces. The king of clubs was then cashed, after which a low club was led from the closed hand. When West followed suit with the ten-spot, dummy's jack was put in. It won, and the slam became assured.

But what if the finesse had lost? In this case, East would be winning the trick with the defenders' sole remaining club, the queen. If East now returned a diamond, declarer would discard a spade from his own hand while ruffing the trick in dummy. Declarer's other losing spade would then be discarded on the board's fifth club. And, of course, if East chose to return a spade, declarer would have no losers in that suit, since his remaining losing spade would be tossed on dummy's fifth club.

As can be observed, had declarer elected to play the ace and king of clubs, in the hope of catching the queen (instead of finessing), he would have lost both a club trick and a spade trick.

## EXHIBIT 10—1948

		NORTH	
		♠	J 8 6 2
		♥	A Q 7
		♦	K 9 7
		♣	A 9 5
WEST		EAST	
♠	K	♠	5 4
♥	J 9 5 2	♥	K 10 8 3
♦	8 5 4	♦	6 3 2
♣	K Q J 6 2	♣	10 8 4 3
		SOUTH	
		♠	A Q 10 9 7 3
		♥	6 4
		♦	A Q J 10
		♣	7

South reached a *six spade* contract, against which West opened the king of clubs, dummy's ace winning, after which declarer ruffed a club. Then came the ace of spades, which dropped West's king. And that was that. Lucky? Yes. Skillful? *Yes*.

Suppose each of the opponents had followed with low spades when declarer laid down his ace. That would leave the king of trumps as the defenders' remaining trump. Dummy would now be entered via the king of diamonds, and the board's last club would be ruffed. Declarer would then run all his diamonds, and let's assume that East had the trump king and he ruffed one of the diamonds (if he didn't ruff, then declarer, after taking his four diamonds, would lead a trump which East would have to take). If East now led a club, declarer would discard a heart while trumping the trick in dummy. And if East led a heart, declarer would obtain a free finesse for the king.

But what if *West* trumped a high diamond? In this case, the trump finesse would not have worked either, and declarer would have had to stake everything on a heart finesse.

Declarer's line of play did not guarantee his contract—it would have been a losing line had East held the three outstanding spades *plus* the king of hearts. However, declarer reasoned that his line of play was superior to taking the trump finesse—and he was right in both theory and practice.

## EXHIBIT 11—1956

NORTH		
♠	Q 2	
♥	10 7 2	
♦	Q 9 4	
♣	A Q 9 8 3	
WEST		
♠	J 9 5 4 3	
♥	3	
♦	7 5 3	
♣	10 5 4 2	
EAST		
♠	7	
♥	K Q J 9 8 6 4	
♦	8	
♣	K J 7 6	
SOUTH		
♠	A K 10 8 6	
♥	A 5	
♦	A K J 10 6 2	
♣	—	

As one kibitzes a bridge game, he sometimes concludes that de-

clarer is playing risky in not drawing all the trumps. Here is a case where if he *did* draw all of the adverse trumps, he *would* be playing risky.

South landed at *seven diamonds* and West led his singleton three of hearts, declarer winning with his ace. Declarer now led the ace of trumps, after which he played a spade to the queen and returned a spade to his ace. On this trick East failed to follow suit. It now became routine play to ruff a spade in dummy, discard the five of hearts on the ace of clubs, ruff a club, and ruff another spade in dummy. The South hand was then re-entered by ruffing a club with a high trump. West's trumps were now picked up, and the rest of the tricks belonged to declarer.

If the point is raised that if East had had a doubleton trump, then declarer would have been defeated, the answer is that if spades were divided 5-1, the hand cannot be made unless the player with the singleton spade also has the singleton trump. But only an expert could be expected to figure this out.

If both opponents had followed to the first two rounds of spades, declarer would have ruffed a spade with dummy's queen of trumps, and then drawn trumps, since in this case his spades would be established.

## EXHIBIT 12—1952

NORTH					
♠	K 7 3				
♥	A Q J 10 6 4				
♦	9				
♣	A K 7				
WEST			EAST		
♠	J 10 8		♠	6 2	
♥	9 8		♥	K 7 3 2	
♦	K 6 5 2		♦	J 10 8 4	
♣	Q 6 4 2		♣	J 10 3	
SOUTH					
♠	A Q 9 5 4				
♥	5				
♦	A Q 7 3				
♣	9 8 5				

This final deal is dedicated to those heroes whose exploits have not been the subject of this book: the skillful *defenders* who, through most imaginative thinking and courageous play, have succeeded in defeating slam contracts which would easily have been fulfilled had the defenders played mechanically. Here is a sample of their wares, with the warning inscribed: *Caveat emptor*.<sup>1</sup>

South reached a *six spade* contract, against which West led the club deuce, North's king winning. The king, queen, and ace of trumps were then cashed, after which the five of hearts was led and dummy's queen finessed. East nonchalantly followed with the deuce of hearts! The ace of hearts was then played, declarer discarding a diamond. On this trick West played the nine of hearts, having played the eight-spot on the previous heart lead.

Declarer was now absolutely convinced that West had started with the K-9-8 of hearts; and hence, that the king would fall on the next lead of the suit. He confidently led a third heart, East followed with the seven, and declarer ruffed—as West failed to follow suit!

Eventually, declarer lost two diamonds and a club, for a two-trick set.

The moral? What price overtrick?

<sup>1</sup> "Let the buyer beware!"



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(Continued from front flap)

and precisely shows how slam contracts are successfully and unsuccessfully executed. By showing the correct and incorrect techniques with specific examples and helpful commentary, he illustrates by achievement and error the proper way to fulfill slam contracts.

Most of the deals included in this book come from top-flight games, but there is a variety here that covers almost every situation, and the book gives the reader an admirable insight into how the mind of the expert functions in the play of slam contracts.

The essence of Mr. Karpin's book is his adroit combination of actual examples with his clear explanations of the rights and wrongs of the situations discussed. For the average bridge player who becomes apprehensive, even panicked by slam contracts, this book will give both the assurance and the techniques necessary to execute successfully the all-important play in the game of contract bridge.

Fred L. Karpin is the author of *The Play of the Cards* and *Psychological Strategy in Contract Bridge*. A bridge teacher and a Life Master of the American Contract Bridge League, Mr. Karpin lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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